BENNETT, COLEMAN & CO. LTD. | Estd. 1838 | VOL. 43 NO. 96 BENGALURU | THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2026 | METRO | PAGES 26 | PRICE ₹6**

THE TIMES OF INDIA

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Children in Britain who are 17 or younger, and anyone born in future, will never be able to legally buy cigarettes after lawmakers approve new stricter restrictions on smoking, P 14

Former World No. 1 Venus Williams, 45, says she hopes to play this year's French Open after returning to compete on clay for the first time in five years and losing in the opening round of Madrid Open, P 16

Florida's attorney general opens a rare criminal investigation into OpenAI's ChatGPT over whether the AI app offered advice to a gunman who killed two people and wounded six others last year at Florida State University, P 14

Saudi Pro League giants **Al Nassr are reportedly considering a move to promote Cristiano Ronaldo's son, Cristianinho,** to the senior squad, potentially setting up a historic father-son pairing next season, P 16

11 killed in multiple-vehicle collision in UP

At least 11 people were killed in a collision involving multiple vehicles that led to a fire in an SUV in Mirzapur late Wednesday, **reports Rajeev Dikshit**.

The tragedy took place when two trucks, a car and an SUV collided on the steep slope of Dramandganj hills around 9 pm.

Mirzapur SP Aparna Rajat Kaushik confirmed the deaths of 11 people, including seven occupants of the SUV, who perished in the fire that erupted after the collision. The other two deceased were the drivers of the car and one of the trucks.

The remaining two are yet to be identified.

TCS staff denied bail in another case

A TCS Nashik office staff, who was arrested recently, was denied interim bail Wednesday by a sessions court in another case of sexual harassment and religious coercion lodged by a male co-worker. P 6

Govt allows ethanol blending in ATF

Widening the definition of jet fuel, govt has allowed blending of ethanol and other synthetic hydrocarbons in ATF to cut emissions and reduce reliance on crude imports. TNN

Brit pleads guilty to Sikh woman rape

A 32-year-old Briton, John Ashby, has pleaded guilty to religiously aggravated rape of a Sikh woman at home in Walsall last Oct. Ashby had directed anti-Muslim abuse at the woman. P 14

Trump hints at talks in 72 hrs even as Iran seizes 2 ships

One Ship Bound For Mundra, Firm Says Crew Safe

TNN & Agencies

President Donald Trump changed his aggressive stance on Iran and extended the ceasefire indefinitely, even as Iran's Revolutionary Guard Wednesday fired on three ships in the Strait of Hormuz, seized two of them and was bringing them to Iran, according to Iranian media.

One of these, the container ship Epaminondas, indicated Mundra port in Gujarat as its destination while another container ship Francesca was signalling that it was heading to Hambantota port in Sri Lanka. The third vessel, container ship Euphoria, was indicating Jeddah in Saudi Arabia as its destination.

Trump extended the ceasefire at the request of Pakistan to give Tehran's leadership more time to prepare a unified proposal to end the war, but said an economic blockade of Iran's ports will remain in place. Iran's parliament speaker and top negotiator Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said that a complete ceasefire only made sense if it was not violated by the US blockade. Qalibaf said the reopening of the strait was impossible with such a "flagrant breach of the ceasefire".

FULL COVERAGE: P 12, 14

Epaminondas and Francesca are operated by the world's largest container shipping line Mediterranean Shipping Co. Technomar Shipping, which owns Epaminondas, said all crew were "safe and accounted for" and no injuries were reported, but that preliminary inspections indicated the ship's bridge had been damaged.

Trump's dramatic announcement came just hours before the two-week ceasefire was set to expire. Pakistan had urged an extension of the truce due to uncertainty surrounding the second round of talks. There was still no clarity on the date of the next round of talks.

On Wednesday, the New York Post quoted Trump as saying that the second round of the US-Iran talks could take place as early as Friday.

Such development was "possible" within the next 36 to 72 hours, the paper reported, quoting Trump.

However, Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei said Tehran has not yet decided whether to attend a new round of Pakistani-mediated talks in Islamabad.

▶No decision yet, P 14

US PREZ EXTENDS CEASEFIRE INDEFINITELY

- TACO taunts: Trump's decision has deepened a perception in Washington that **admin's Iran policy is less a doctrine and more of a mood swing**, and it is being improvised in real time
- With global markets jittery, oil routes under strain, and Tehran signalling reluctance even to show up for talks, Washington faces an **unenviable choice between escalation** into a potentially costly conflict **and backing down** from its own threats
- Oil prices reverse course to head higher, **Brent crude futures up almost 4%** at $102.2 a barrel. After a 3-session winning run, **sensex closes 757 points lower** at 78,516 points. **Rupee declines 34p to close at 93.78** against the US dollar
- Govt-authorised fertiliser company IPL set to **import 25L tonnes of urea in $935-$959/ tonne** range — almost double the rate two months ago
- Trump says **Iran had halted alleged plans to execute 8 women** arrested over anti-govt protests, after he urged Tehran to release them. Iran **denied it planned to execute** the women

'Fake news': Govt denies Indian ship captain paid for passage

Govt on Wednesday dismissed as "fake news" online reports alleging that the captain of Indian-flagged ship, Sanmar Herald, paid either in cash or cryptocurrency, to Iran to secure safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz. Sanmar Shipping Ltd also said these reports are "completely false". Sanmar Herald had to turn back after Iranian forces fired at it on April 18. "We spoke with the owner of the vessel and he confirmed... no such incident had happened," said Mukesh Mangal, additional secretary in the shipping ministry. P 8

Centre plans special ships to lower costs for exporters

Govt is working with agencies, including the Shipping Corporation of India, which was on the privatisation list until recently, to run special vessels to West Asia to help exporters move their goods at cheaper rates, **reports Sidhartha**. DGFT has held consultations on the issue and APEDA, which is tasked with farm exports, will lead cargo aggregation efforts, including identifying and roping in exporters. The move indicates that agricultural products — from perishables to rice and tea — will be given a major push. P 11

Silk Board mess is history now; Ragigudda double-decker opens

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Chethan Shivakumar

Traffic police informally opened the 3.5-km-long double-decker corridor from Silk Board junction to Ragigudda, Jayanagar, on Wednesday

Bengaluru: Central Silk Board junction — which, for years, was infamous for crippling traffic snarls and the subject of endless memes — has become a breeze.

On Wednesday, traffic police informally opened the much-awaited 3.5-km-long double-decker corridor from Silk Board junction to Ragigudda, Jayanagar. The double-decker has five ramps at the Silk Board junction. Three ramps were already operational for close to two years.

▶ FULL COVERAGE: PAGE 3

With the flyover open, motorists can skip five signals at the junction. The city's first double-decker project was executed by Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation at a cost of ₹520cr. At Central Silk Board, Outer Ring Road converges with NH-44 (Hosur Road). Silk Board links two major IT corridors — ORR & Electronics City.

Daily commuters travelling along ORR (KR Pura to Silk Board) are elated. BMRCL started work in Aug 2017. In July 2024, it opened the Ragigudda-Silk Board stretch of the flyover for motorists without fanfare. The Yellow Line metro, built on the second level of the structure, opened in Aug 2025 along with other stretches of the Yellow Line from RV Road to Bommasandra, bringing huge commuting relief to lakhs of tech and other professionals taking this route.

Bombay HC clears four in 2006 Malegaon blasts case

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Mumbai: The Bombay high court on Wednesday set aside a trial court order that framed charges against four accused in the 2006 Malegaon blasts case, under anti-terror law and other offences, effectively discharging them from the case and sparing them a trial.

▶ Judge recuses from hearing PIL against ex-CM Kejriwal, P 6

The four accused facing the terror trial had appealed and sought the setting aside of a 2025 special NIA court order that framed 19 charges against them. Chief Justice Shree Chandrashekhar and Justice S C Chandak, pronouncing their judgment on Wednesday, said, "Appeals are allowed." The detailed judgment is awaited. A decade ago, nine other accused had been discharged in the case by a special trial court.

There are three others named as absconding or wanted accused, against whom NIA did not file its chargesheet.

On Sept 8, 2006, around 1.50pm, four bombs exploded in Malegaon, three in the compound of Hamidiya Masjid and Bada Kabrastan and the fourth at Mushawart Chowk. The explosions killed 31 people and injured 312.

▶'NIA has no proof', P 7

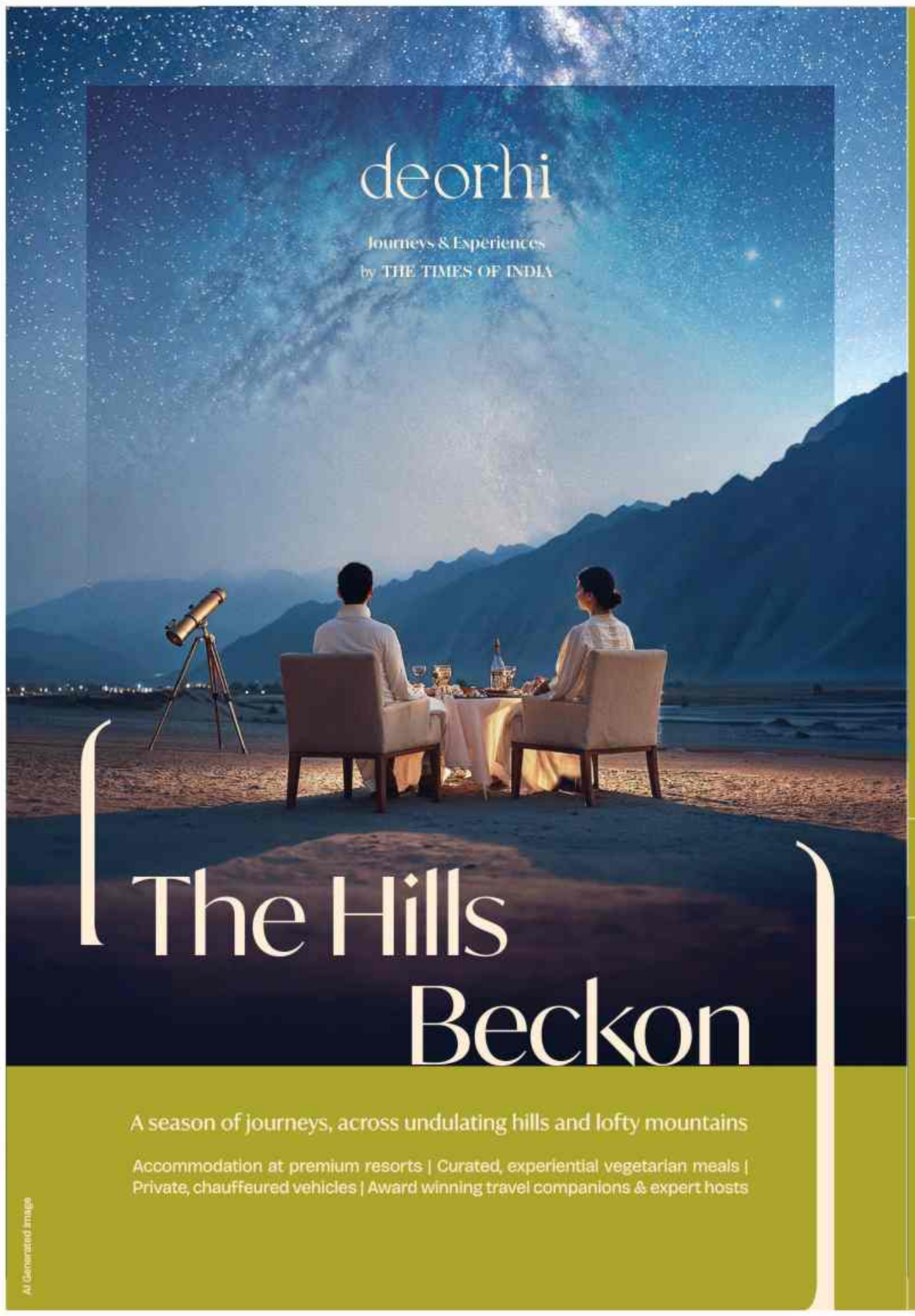
New regulator, age verification in gaming rules

New Delhi: India's new online gaming framework has tightened oversight of real-money gaming, placing banks at the centre of enforcement. User protection provisions, including "age verification or age-restriction mechanisms", form a core part of the rules.

The Online Gaming Authority of India will act as the central regulator.

The Online Gaming Promotion and Regulation Rules, 2026, notified on Wednesday, will come into force from May 1, marking a shift towards a more structured regulatory regime. TNN

▶In-app rewards, P 7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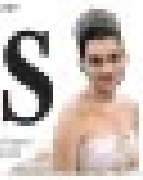


The journey of a producer is so different and so difficult. I'm not going to whine or crawl. It is very difficult. I have gone over those years. There is no one and no guardian angel. You are not making a film, three years is a long period of time

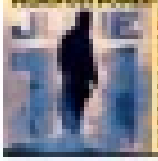
The EXPECTATIONS MANAGER

& handler of unfulfilled dreams

I have never had a 100 crore film. But I am among the most successful producers in India. If you have a 100 crore, you have validation. But if I have made a film in '15 or and I have made 30 or so of, I am very high AQ!

Reese Witherspoon clarifies on AI post after backlash

Buzzstop



WHAT'S #TRENDING AND WHY

Two years after divorce, Jos Jones confirms relationship with Tatiana

Australia's social media ban for kids faces loopholes by tech giants

The Cool Woes Prada Salvage Sydney Sweeney comes over 'sensitive' suit

Ice stunt sparks chaos as Drake teases album date

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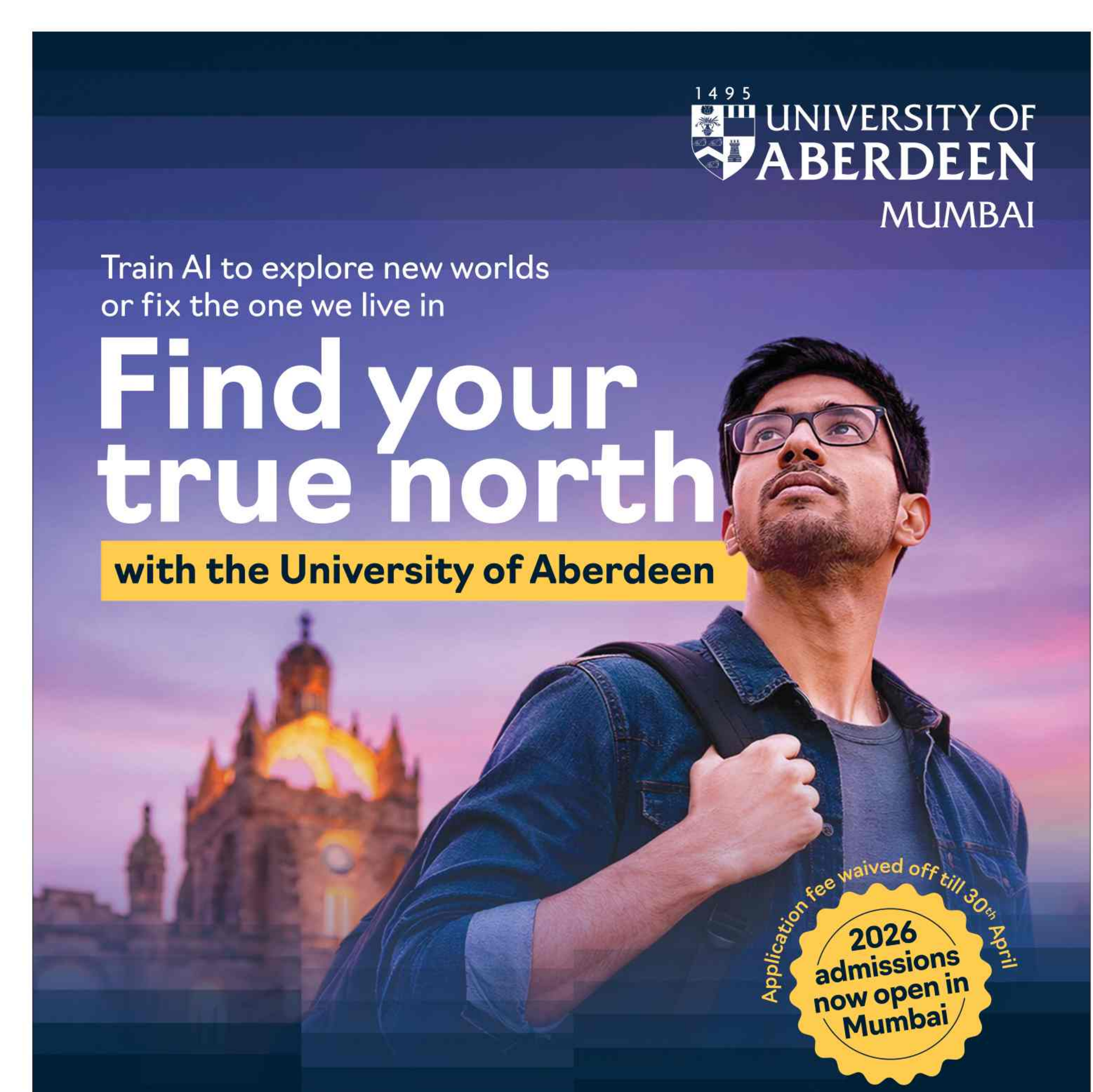

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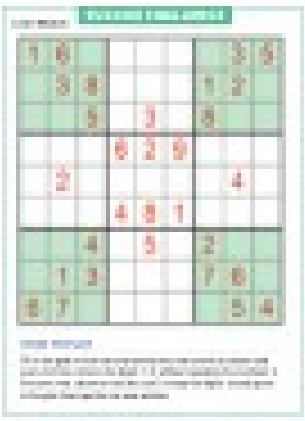
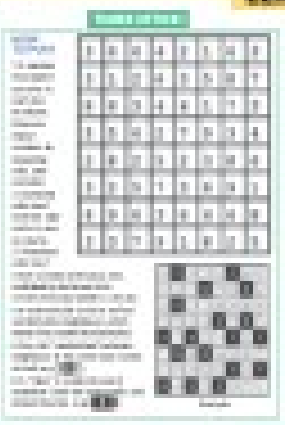
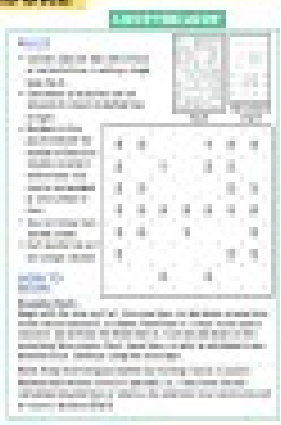
Makers celebrate the success of an impactful socially driven film

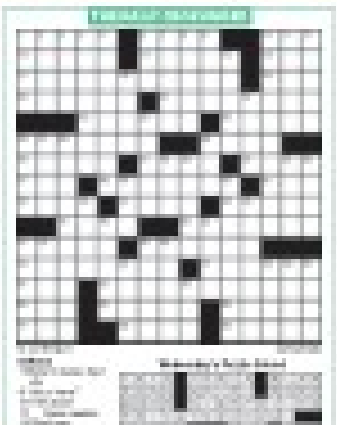
A grand rudraksha exhibition in Bengaluru

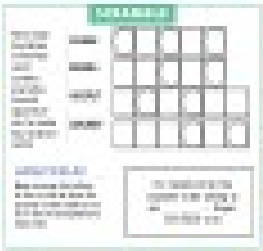
LEISURE

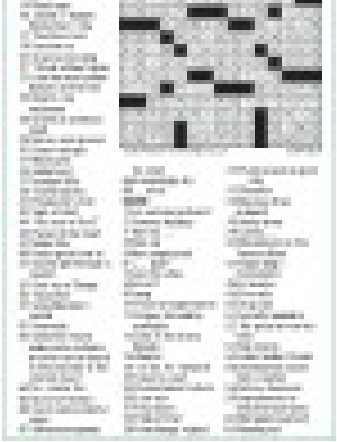


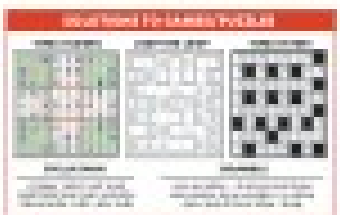












DOUBLE-DECKER FLYOVER OPENS FLOODGATES OF CHEERS AND EASY RIDE: 3.5-KM STRETCH TOOK 30-40 MINS DURING PEAK HRS. NOW IT'S JUST MATTER OF 10 MINUTES

Double delight: Joy of crossing Silk Board sans traffic signal

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Bengaluru: "First in my bloodline to cross Silk Board without a traffic signal," a motorist chortled on the web. His celebration was evident. With the opening of a double-decker flyover over Silk Board junction, one of its ramps has facilitated easy traffic flow from HSR Layout towards Jayanagar.

Another netizen exclaimed on social media: "Wow! This (is) a dream come true! I have spent a good chunk of my life on that Silk board traffic junction travelling from ITPL to BTM Layout!"

Techies joked they wrote codes while in traffic

Before the ramps (including the previously opened one connecting Ragigudda with Hosur Road-HSR Layout) were conceived, Silk Board junction was emblematic of Bengaluru's traffic nightmare. For nearly a decade, it was, perhaps, the first traffic junction in the country to get a parody social media account.

Motorists, especially tech company employees travelling towards Electronics City and Mahadevapura, initially dreaded Silk Board junction and later came to terms with their predicament cracking jokes on getting stuck at the junction.

They said in lighter vein: We write codes and programs for startups, with thousands of motor engines idling away.

Cut to the present. Motorists who would take more than 40 minutes to navigate 3.5km now vroom from HSR Layout towards Ragigudda in under 10 minutes. And five traffic signals less.

Ravi Kumar, a daily commuter, hoped this would ease traffic congestion at Silk Board junction.

Vijeth Kumar, an 'X' user, said he was able to drive from Silk Board to Ragigudda in 6-8 minutes as against nearly an hour earlier.

"The Marenahalli signal was manually managed, and I crossed it in a minute," he further said.

HASSLE-FREE RIDE
(SILK BOARD TO RAGIGUDDA)

- Built as part of the Yellow Line of Namma Metro to ease traffic congestion at Silk Board and stretch between Silk Board and Ragigudda

₹520cr	3.5km	2
Cost of construction	Total length	lanes on either side

- Stretch between Ragigudda to Silk Board opened from July 17, 2024
- Trial run of Silk Board to Ragigudda started from April 22, 2026

133 spans length ranging from 1.2 metres to 27.1

43m	25m
Special span length at Jayadeva Hospital junction 43m	At CSB – road built 25 metres above ground level

Chethan Shivakumar

IN A JIFFY: Commuters can now bypass five traffic signals by taking the flyover from HSR Layout side towards Ragigudda, crossing Silk Board junction, in less than 10 minutes

5 RAMPS AT JUNCTION

- **Ramp A** Ragigudda to Hosur Road
- **B** BTM Layout to Hosur Road to HSR Layout
- **C** Towards HSR Layout
- **D** HSR Layout to Ragigudda
- **E** HSR Layout to BTM Layout

FUNNY & POPULAR NICKNAMES OF SILK BOARD JUNCTION

- India's Largest Parking Lot
- Silk Boarded
- Chaar Jam Yatra
- Silicon City's Waiting Room
- Silk Board Black Hole
- Bermuda Triangle of Bengaluru
- Endless Signal Junction

Marenahalli Road to take Silk Board load & memes

Times News Network

Bengaluru: One traffic junction's joy is another's peril. The Marenahalli signal — a little-discussed junction on the city's traffic map, near Sri Raghavendraswamy Mutt in Jayanagar — is set to face congestion that's shifted from Silk Board junction. Handling traffic volume on Marenahalli Road — from Ragigudda Road to Banashankari bus terminus — and on the approaching roads in Jayanagar and JP Nagar will be challenging.

A traffic official said, "By taking the elevated road from Silk Board to Ragigudda, motorists avoid five signals, including those at BTM Layout and Jayadeva Hospital. On the first day, additional staff were deployed to manage traffic in Jayanagar and Banashankari traffic police limits."

In the past, GBA proposed construction of an underpass to ease congestion, but taking up road infrastructure projects remains challenging. A traffic official said, "There is no scope for widening Marenahalli Road as it is a developed area. Any further construction would also impact the flow of traffic."

"An announcement has been made in the budget and infrastructure work will be taken up. We'll conduct a feasibility study before finalising whether the construction of an underpass or other road infrastructure solutions would be suitable"
RAMESH KN
Bengaluru South Corporation commissioner

Bengaluru South Corporation commissioner Ramesh KN said, "An announcement has been made in the budget and infrastructure work will be taken up. We'll conduct a feasibility study before finalising whether the construction of an underpass or other road infrastructure solutions would be suitable."

— Nyasa Gupta

Six tahsildars served notice over slow census work

Times News Network

Cracking the whip on slow progress of census work, Kolar deputy commissioner M R Ravi Wednesday issued show-cause notice to eight officials, including six tahsildars, for lapses in house-listing and poor monitoring of enumerators.

Ravi had reviewed the progress of census work Tuesday and expressed concern over its slow pace. He noted a significant number of enumerators failed to log in and carry out their assigned duties, hampering progress across multiple taluks.

The tahsildars served with notices are Geetha (Mulbagal), Roopa (Malur), Bharath (KGF), Sujatha K S (Bangarpet), Sudheendra (Srinivasapura) and Nayana (Kolar). In addition, zilla panchayat chief planning officer Ravichandra N and Kolar DDPI Almas Parveen Taz have been issued notice for supervisory lapses.

According to the notices, the census exercise has been significantly affected by the non-participation of enumerators. "In Mulbagal taluk alone, as many as 121 enumerators have not logged in, while Malur reported 256 such cases. Kolar taluk also witnessed 217 enumerators failing to log in, followed by 126 in KGF and 86 in Bangarpet," the notice stated. Officials in the deputy commissioner's office indicated that these figures point to inadequate oversight at the taluk level.

The eight officials have been directed to submit written explanations within 24 hours of receiving the notices.

Absenteeism and cost overrun hit house-listing

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Bengaluru: The ongoing house-listing phase of Census 2027 in Bengaluru has been hit by serious lapses on the ground, with officials flagging poor performance and widespread absenteeism of enumerators, leading to duplication of work, delays and escalating costs.

"Each enumerator is assigned roughly 200 households — classified as one block — but the authorities say many have failed to complete even the basic enumeration. Citing extreme heat and the unavailability of residents during daytime visits, several enumerators have reportedly avoided fieldwork altogether, while still claiming completion and drawing payments," said a senior Bengaluru North city corporation (BNCC) official.

"In multiple instances, partially covered or entirely untouched blocks have been reassigned to new enumerators. These replacements, paid around Rs 5,000 per month, often repeat the same pattern — leaving work incomplete or abandoning assignments midway. As a result, a single block is in some cases being handled by up to three enumerators, even as enumeration on the ground remains unfinished," the official added.

GBA officials admit such lapses have led to duplication of surveys and, in certain cases, nearly threefold expenditure. "The integrity of the data is at risk if this continues. We are seeing instances where records are inconsistent or missing altogether," a senior official said.

GBA has taken a stern view of the situation. Of the 26,616 personnel deployed, including 23,700 enumerators and 2,900 supervisors, nearly 6,000 are currently absent without authorisation. In response, GBA has issued show-cause notices and initiated daily SMS and phone-call follow-ups to ensure attendance. It has also warned of strict disciplinary action under the Census Act, 1948, including a "no work, no pay" policy, break-in-service orders and the filing of FIRs against persistent defaulters. "All personnel must report to duty immediately. Failure to comply will invite formal action from April 24," chief commissioner Maheshwar Rao said.

The situation has also sparked concern among employees with disabilities, who have petitioned for exemptions from field duties. While limited relief has been granted to those unable to walk, broader demands remain under consideration. With the census exercise scheduled between April 16 and May 15, officials warn unless accountability mechanisms are tightened and enumerator performance improves, both the credibility of the data and public funds could be compromised.

— With inputs from Nyasa Gupta

CENSUS 2027

File photo

NO SHOW: Of the 26,616 personnel deployed, nearly 6,000 are currently absent without authorisation

"In multiple instances, partially covered or entirely untouched blocks have been reassigned to new enumerators. These replacements, paid around Rs 5,000 per month, often repeat the same pattern — leaving work incomplete or abandoning assignments midway
—A BNCC official

NOT A GREAT START SO FAR

- Many enumerators have failed to finish assigned household surveys, leading to repeated assignments and duplication of effort
- Due to reassignment and inefficiencies, some census blocks are being handled multiple times, pushing expenses to nearly three times the expected cost
- Officials warn of inconsistent or missing records, raising serious concerns about the reliability of the census data
- Authorities have issued show-cause notices and warned of legal action erring officials

Advocate alleges masked stranger flashed at her

Times News Network

Bengaluru: A 38-year-old advocate has alleged that a masked man flashed at her while she was walking her pet dog on the morning of April 20 in Sadanandanagar in east Bengaluru.

NO CCTV AT SPOT

According to the complaint filed by the woman, a resident of Sadanandanagar who practises at the high court, she was walking her dog on 2nd Cross, 7th Main, Sadanandanagar, when she noticed a man, wearing a mask and grey t-shirt and seated on a scooter, staring at her.

She passed by him and as she turned back to look, the man unzipped his pants and flashed at her. She immediately raised an alarm, and the man fled on his scooter, which the woman recalled as having registration number KA-51-LJ-8000.

Police at Byappanahalli police station filed a case under BNS Sections 75 (sexual harassment), 79 (word, gesture, or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman), 292 (punishment for public nuisance in cases not otherwise provided for), and 296 (obscene acts and songs).

An officer said the woman stated that the man was wearing a mask. "There was no CCTV camera at the spot. We have analysed footage from surrounding areas and have traced the scooterist's movement. Efforts are on to trace the accused," he said.

Ex-factor decoded: Woman says boyfriend avoided her

Times News Network

Bengaluru: Cops have uncovered a chilling motive behind the brutal killing of a man by his lover: She was jealous and angry after she discovered that he was getting close to his ex-girlfriend.

The accused, 27-year-old Prema, lured 29-year-old Kiran LN into an intimate BDSM activity involving role play before carrying out the murder — a cold and calculated plan. The incident took place at her residence in Anjananagar in Byadarahalli police limits of northwest Bengaluru Tuesday.

According to police, Prema and Kiran, colleagues at a mobile service store in Rajajinagar, had been in a relationship. While Prema reportedly was keen on taking the relationship to the next step of marriage, Kiran had allegedly begun to withdraw.

Victim reconnected with ex-gf that angered her

The situation escalated when he allegedly reconnected with his ex-partner and celebrated her birthday, photographs of which were found by Prema on his phone. This discovery, coupled with his growing distance and reluctance to any commitment, appears to have pushed Prema into a state of turmoil, police said.

Prema (L) and Kiran LN

She allegedly began planning the murder and bought petrol, kerosene, and rope.

Under the pretext of meeting him alone, she invited Kiran to her residence in Anjananagar.

According to a complaint filed by Kiran's father Narasimhaiah, he received a call from a villager asking him to come to Bengaluru, stating his son had been killed. He reached the house in the evening and learned that Prema, who lived on the second floor, had invited Kiran over.

Police said Prema decided to kill Kiran as she didn't want him to marry anybody else and had contemplated suicide, but developed cold feet seeing Kiran suffer to death

When Narasimaiah reached the spot, he learned from the building owner, Chetan Kumar, and neighbours that Prema ran out of the house and asked for help to save Kiran. Residents attempted to douse the fire using buckets of water. As the flames could not be controlled, they alerted police and fire and emergency services.

When Narasimhaiah questioned Prema, she confessed to be in a relationship with Kiran and disputes arose over minor issues. She then decided he should not marry anyone else and planned to kill him, police said. She had contemplated suicide, but developed cold feet seeing Kiran suffer to death.

GBA chief's identity faked in WhatsApp fraud

Times News Network

Bengaluru: A case of cyber fraud and identity misuse was filed Wednesday at Amruthahalli police station in north Bengaluru against "unknown person" for impersonating Bengaluru North City Corporation commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar to solicit funds on WhatsApp.

The FIR was filed by a gazetted officer, Akshath M M, a resident of Sahakaranagar, following a suspicious online incident earlier in the day.

Police said preliminary findings indicate that unknown persons misused the name, designation and photograph of Kumar to send WhatsApp messages from an international number.

The fraudulent communication was also reportedly sent to Amaresh H, secretary of State Election Commission.

"This is a clear case of impersonation intended to defraud unsuspecting individuals," an official of Greater Bangalore Authority (GBA) further said. Police said the accused was listed as "Unknown Person (A1)" in the FIR.

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Loose ends in Kodagu homestay case, probe to explore all angles

G Rajendra | TNN

Madikeri: The shocking case of US tourist's sexual assault has raised uneasy questions, as investigators examine conflicting statements, digital evidence and prior interactions during the survivor's stay in Kodagu district. Key details of the remain undisclosed by authorities.

According to police sources, the Washington-based tourist alleged she was sexually assaulted on April 12, the day she checked into the homestay. She reportedly spent the next two days visiting nearby places in Kodagu, stating she was out for sightseeing.

A senior police officer in Bengaluru confirmed that the tourist was drugged and raped at the Kodagu homestay. On April 15, she travelled to Mysuru, from where she contacted officials at the US embassy. The embassy forwarded the communication to Indian authorities via email, prompting Karnataka police to initiate formal proceedings and begin an investigation.

The case has drawn further attention due to allegations that the homestay owner restricted her communication. Police sources said the owner is suspected of disconnecting WiFi access for nearly three days, allegedly limiting her ability to seek immediate help.

Officials, however, noted that mobile network connectivity was available within about 1km from the property.

The homestay in Kodagu where the American tourist reportedly stayed

CCTV footage reviewed by investigators indicates the woman visited the homestay owner's residence on April 13 during her stay and interacted with his family, including his mother, adding layers of complexity to the probe. Officials said the victim had stayed at the same property earlier in March, raising questions over her decision to return in April.

A key point of concern is police and district authorities have not made the first information report public, which typically contains the complainant's account of the alleged incident. The reason for withholding the details has not been officially clarified. Police maintained the inquiry is at a preliminary stage and all angles are being examined.

HM: Will check on homestay licence

▶ Continued from page 1

Home minister G Parameshwara said police acted on communication from the Union home ministry and arrested the accused. "We will check whether the homestay has a licence and follows SOPs. If violations are found, legal action will be taken," he added.

Kodagu district in-charge minister N S Boseraju said he had directed police to conduct a thorough probe.

Police said forensic analysis and collection of digital evidence were under way. "All angles, including possible complicity, are being examined," a police officer said.

The homestay management said that CCTV footage had been shared with the investigators.

Safety concerns may dent tourism industry

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Bengaluru: A fresh case of alleged sexual assault of a US national in Kodagu district has reignited concerns over tourist safety in Karnataka. Officials warn of a possible further decline in foreign tourist arrivals which have shown an uneven trend in 2025.

Tourism department data indicates that safety-related incidents have had a direct bearing on international travel sentiment. A high-profile case near Sanapur lake in Koppal district on March 6, 2025 — involving the gangrape of two women, including an Israeli tourist, and the murder of a man — led to a sharp decline in foreign visitors to nearby Hampi, a Unesco world heritage site.

Officials said such incidents trigger negative publicity and disrupt travel plans. The case in Kodagu, a popular destination known for its homestay culture, is expected to have a similar impact.

In Karnataka's tourism sector, domestic footfall remains robust, but international visitor numbers fluctuate. With Karnataka positioning itself as a key global destination, authorities are expected to face pressure to address safety concerns and prevent further erosion of international tourist inflow.

> **Kodagu district is renowned worldwide for tourism. Such incidents have a serious negative impact on the district's reputation and tourism**
>
> **S BOSERAJU |** Kodagu district minister

Official data shows total visits rising from 7.8 crore in Covid-hit 2021 to a peak of 31 crore in 2024, before dropping marginally to 30.2 crore in 2025. Domestic tourism continues to dominate, accounting for 30 crore visits annually. However, foreign tourist numbers increased from 71,000 in 2021 to 5.1 lakh in 2024, before falling to 4.3 lakh in 2025.

Expressing concern, home minister G Parameshwara said strict action would be taken against the guilty. "Action must be taken accordingly. Whoever is running such a place, like a homestay, must have a proper licence. We have laid down SOPs on what needs to be followed to operate a homestay. If such incidents occur, legal action must be taken," he said, adding such incidents damage the state's image, particularly when foreign nationals are involved.

Heat triggers transformer fault, water supply disrupted

Times News Network

Bengaluru: With near-record temperatures persisting over the past few days, the city's power infrastructure has come under stress.

As the searing daytime heat resulted in unusually warm hours late Tuesday night, a line breaker at the 220 kV station in Somanahalli on the city's outskirts that supplies power to the BWSSB pumping station, witnessed a rare flashover, briefly disrupting power supply to the Cauvery pumping station at Tataguni. It impacted water supply to parts of the city.

Engineers said the heat-triggered electrical disruption damaged the B-phase current transformer (CT), leading to oil leakage at the station. BWSSB sources noted that temperatures at Somanahalli touched 37 degrees Celsius Tuesday. A BWSSB engineer confirmed the rarity of the incident, stating, "Even though electrical incidents are common and often unexpected, this kind of event due to heat stress has not occurred before at this site, and our team of engineers acted immediately to fix it."

TOI

A rare flashover at Somanahalli power station Tuesday night

A technical official involved in the restoration explained: "The incident was due to damage in the breakers, which failed to detect the fault, such as an overload. The flashover created a critical condition with high-voltage arcing that risked nearby equipment and personnel. Oil from the compromised CT leaked due to thermal expansion from surging daytime temperatures, due to sizzling summer conditions. But our personnel were quick to act on it and reduce the intensity of the impact."

The faulted section was isolated, leaked oil was safely drained, and the damaged CT was replaced, another BWSSB engineer said.

BWSSB chairperson V Ram Prasath Manohar termed the episode an outcome of extreme weather conditions. "It was an unexpected situation due to extreme weather incidents near Tataguni. But our officials and engineers were quick enough to respond to the problem. Due to the repair work at the site, Cauvery water supply was affected in parts of the city from 12:30pm to 3pm (Wednesday). Subsequently, the system was restored, and the water supply resumed."

-By Nadi Ganadhal

B'luru sizzles at 36.6°C

Bengaluru: After a brief dip over the past few days, temperatures in the city surged again Wednesday, matching the season's highest of 36.6 degrees Celsius recorded on April 14. According to India Meteorological Department (IMD), the mercury level was recorded at the Palace Road observatory.

IMD scientists indicated that there is unlikely to be any significant change in temperatures across Karnataka, including Bengaluru, over the next five days.

"Maximum temperatures are expected to remain about 1.6-3 degrees Celsius above normal, hovering close to 37 degrees Celsius. The city is likely to reach its peak summer phase this week, after which thunderstorm activity may set in, bringing down temperatures by around 1-2 degrees Celsius," an IMD official said.

TOI

SUMMER BLUES: Under a harsh April sun, umbrellas turn into daily companions for commuters on Magadi Road in Bengaluru Wednesday

Ranya Rao walks out of jail after 1-year detention

Times News Network

Bengaluru: Kannada actor **Ranya Rao** walked out of prison Wednesday following the completion of her one-year detention period under the Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities (COFEPOSA) Act. She is the daughter of senior IPS officer Ramachandra Rao, currently under suspension for being seen in a sleaze video while in police uniform.

Ranya's detention period, which ran from April 22, 2025, to April 22, 2026, officially concluded this morning. Her release comes just one week after the Supreme Court upheld the detention order against her and her associate, Sahil Sakaria Jain, dismissing a final plea for an early release.

The legal saga began on the night of March 3, 2025, when sleuths from the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) intercepted Ranya Rao at Kempegowda International Airport. During the search, officials discovered 14.2 kilograms of gold bars concealed on her.

Following the seizure, the DRI initiated proceedings under the COFEPOSA Act, citing the scale of the operation and the need to prevent further smuggling activities. The Act allows authorities to detain individuals without trial for up to one year as a preventive measure. According to the DRI, along with subsequent investigations by the Enforcement Directorate (ED), Rao and her associates allegedly smuggled a total of 127kg of gold into India between March 2024 and March 2025. The DRI has since imposed a penalty of Rs 102.5 crore on Ranya.

Victoria Hospital to probe death of Fournier's gangrene patient

Times News Network

Bengaluru: An internal investigation committee has been constituted at Victoria Hospital after a 45-year-old man being treated for Fournier's gangrene allegedly died of massive bleeding.

Nawaz Shah, a city resident, came to the hospital on Feb 19 with a condition called Fournier's gangrene — a rare, rapidly progressing, life-threatening infection that affects the genitals, the perineum, and sometimes the lower abdominal wall.

He underwent multiple surgeries at the hospital and was later discharged from the surgical department into the care of the plastic surgery department. As the plastic surgeons waited for the wound to heal before they could fully close it, they recommended that the patient continue his care as an outpatient and visit the hospital every two days for wound dressing. After a few such visits, Shah died on April 15. His wife subsequently lodged a complaint with the hospital alleging medical negligence.

"The wife alleged that the patient was discharged even though he had a large wound. After multiple surgeries, our team ensured that the patient's infection was under control. The edges of the wound need to heal before plastic surgeons can perform the closing procedure, which usually takes three to five weeks. I have learned that he came at least twice to get the dressing changed," said Dr Deepak S, medical superintendent of the hospital.

While patients with similar conditions are usually discharged to reduce the risk of secondary infections, Dr Deepak said the matter still requires investigation, as each case is different. "The wife has claimed that he died of bleeding, but we cannot say with certainty yet whether he died due to a wound complication or disease progression. We also do not know the extent of the bleeding, as he did not return to the hospital," he said.

The probe committee comprises three heads of departments — of medicine, surgery, and plastic surgery — and will submit its report within four to five days. "We will act based on the report," Dr Deepak added.

Concretisation of Hennur-Bagalur Road set for 'June 15' completion

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Bengaluru: The concetisation of Hennur-Bagalur Road is expected to be complete by June 15, with officials indicating that the main roadwork will be finished by May and the remaining footpath and utility work in another three months.

Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) chief commissioner Maheshwar Rao inspected the site Wednesday and directed officials to accelerate pace of work. He ordered for additional staff to be deployed and buffer zones and footpaths to be developed in parallel with the white-topping work.

The project was taken up in April 2025 with an 11-month deadline, but was delayed due to lack of clearance from traffic police for work on larger portions of the road, a senior B-SMILE official said. "We got only a quarter portion of the road at a time. Each portion had to be completed and opened to traffic before taking up the next. As we had to carry out the work only at night, the work was further delayed," the official said.

WORK IN FULL SWING

However, over the past four months, authorities have permitted work on half the road at a time, resulting in improved progress. Officials said the carriageway work is now nearing completion, while footpath and buffer zone development has also begun.

The project is estimated to cost Rs 86.29 crore and covers a 5.5-km stretch from Hennur Cross to Bagalur Cross, spanning two Assembly constituencies. So far, around 4.2 km on one side and 2.2 km on the other side have been completed.

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Police on hunt for molester

Bengaluru: City police have launched a manhunt for a miscreant who, while riding pillion on a scooter, tried to sexually assault a girl walking by the roadside. The incident happened at Marutinagar in Kogilu under the jurisdiction of Yelahanka police in the north east division.

The video shows two youths riding on a gearless scooter and, on passing two girls, the pillion rider stretches his left hand in a bid to sexually assault the girl. "We have noted down the registration number of the two-wheeler and have traced the address of the owner. Soon, we will trace the youths and initiate legal action against them," police said. TNN

ONE PLANET FOR ALL

TOI

Battle against plastic waste across coastline

Marking World Earth Day, a 3-year 'Karnataka Zero Waste Initiative' was launched Wednesday to build community-led waste management systems along the state's 320-km coastline, where nearly 60% of litter is plastic. It seeks to connect over 80,000 households and integrate 50 coastal villages into formal waste management systems, while supporting 200 waste workers with stable livelihoods and safer working conditions. The initiative by Sattva Group in partnership with Knowledge Realty Trust and rePurpose Global also aims to process 4.5 million kg of waste to prevent it from entering marine ecosystems.

AWARENESS MATTERS: Children participate in the World Earth Day organised at Bal Bhavan in Bengaluru Wednesday

19-year-old held for dumping foetus in toilet

Bengaluru: Bengaluru Rural Police have arrested a 19-year-old employee of Foxconn for allegedly disposing of a foetus inside a toilet at the company's manufacturing facility near Devanahalli Tuesday night.

The discovery of the foetus in the women's toilet triggered panic at the facility, which employs more than 25,000 people. The management alerted police, who recovered the foetus and, based on preliminary inquiries, identified the woman and took her into custody. According to investigating officers, the woman is unmarried and was in a relationship with a neighbour. TNN

How B'luru placed itself on SILK ROUTE MAP

Times News Network

The Chinese dominated the silk trade for a long time by trading processed yarn but never sharing silkworms or eggs with the outside world. The monopoly broke around 6th century CE when silkworm eggs were smuggled out of China. It was not until another 1,200 years later that Bengaluru began its journey towards becoming an important centre for organised silk trade.

Captivated by the magic of silk fabrics, rulers Tipu Sultan, to the Wodeyars and JN Tata undertook a series of initiatives to boost local production of the yarn — in the 1700s, Tipu had sent delegations to Bengal to fetch silkworms; JN Tata set up a training centre in Bengaluru in 1896, and Krishnaraja Wadiyar standardised silk production in the 1900s.

"JN Tata played a crucial role by setting up a silk training farm in Bengaluru, supported by the progressive Mysore administration. By the early 20th century, Mysuru was rapidly industrialising, aided by early electrification driven by Kolar Gold Fields, and silk production adopted power looms rather than handlooms, contrary to popular belief," said Roopa Pai, a city-based author and historian.

'Pattunool pete' in city

Kempegowda's original pete area, where streets were organised by trades of commodities like rice, salt, cotton etc, made space for a 'pattunool pete' (silk yarn market), reflecting the long-standing presence of silk merchants.

As Bengaluru's silk trade expanded, it gave rise to establishments like Vijaylakshmi Silks, which was set up in the 1920s by Devatha Adappa Venkata Ratnam Setty, a Kolar native from a sericulture family who moved to the city to tap into the growing market. A two-day exhibition showcasing 105 archival and signature sari designs was organised as part of its centenary at Sabha Blr, off Kamaraj Road.

TOI

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS: A two-day viewing of 105 of iconic silk sari designs was organised at Sabha Blr, off Kamaraj Road

Opening the collections, Mysuru royal family member Kamakshi Devi Wodeyar has recalled the royal family's association with Mysore silk. "One of my childhood memories is the Mysore Silk Factory (which became KSIC Silk Weaving Factory after Independence) sending silk sarees and panches (pyjamas) for the family," she said. A copy of her trousseau is also on display.

Her grand-uncle Krishnaraja Wadiyar was instrumental in importing power looms from Switzerland that scaled the production of high quality Mysore silk.

> **Ramanagara, about 40km away from city, is now Asia's largest silk cocoon market, Sidlaghatta the second largest, and Kolar and Chintamani are emerging as major sericulture centres, while the Central Silk Board's genetic resource centre supports research and breeding**
>
> **ROOPA PAI** Author and historian

'My father taught me abundance mindset'

The story of Say Salaam India: 75 lakh, 27 volunteers on bikes, and 350 shows

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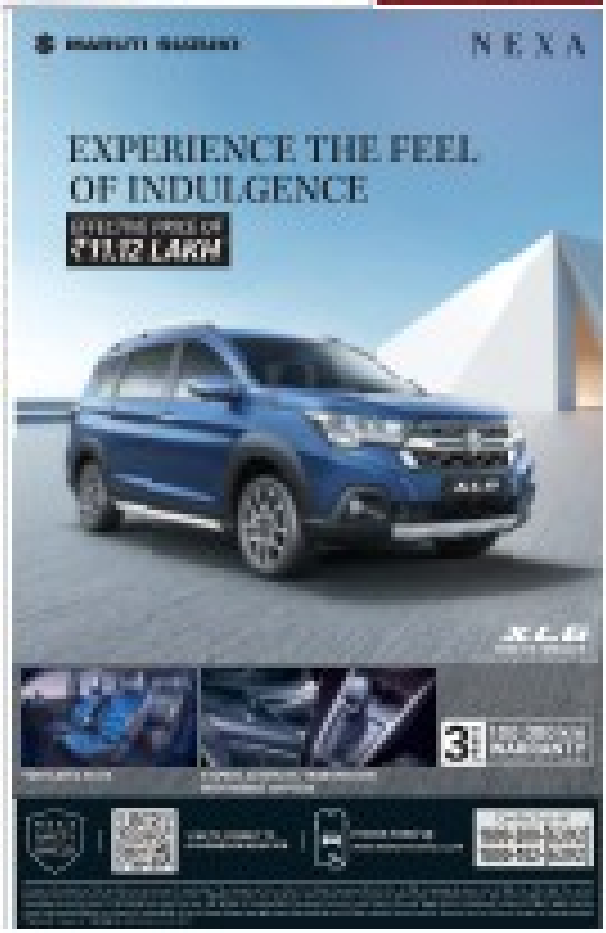

Cabinet panel clears sops for 13 firms

Bengaluru: A cabinet sub-committee headed by chief minister Siddaramaiah Wednesday approved additional incentives for 13 companies, with large semiconductor investments of up to Rs 50,000 crore leading the list. The panel, which evaluates projects above Rs 500 crore, also considered proposals from firms including Dalmia Bharat Cements and Aequs Technologies.

But the sops come with a rider. "The CM and deputy CM DK Shivakumar, while agreeing to absorb a huge loss in revenue, have told officials to negotiate with companies to ensure that a majority of employees are Kannadigas across Group A, B, C and D," a minister said.

While existing norms mandate 100% local hiring in Group D roles, the govt has pushed for preference for locals in skilled and managerial positions. The sub-committee also asked officials to balance incentives with fiscal prudence. "In some cases, we have asked officials to reduce sops from 40% to 35%, and in others from 25% to 20%. No project was rejected as they are important for the state," the minister said. TNN

VP hits out at Kharge over terror remark

Bidar: Vice-president **CP Radhakrishnan** Wednesday took a veiled dig at Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge over his remarks against PM Narendra Modi, saying the Rajya Sabha opposition leader cannot distinguish between terror and those who fight it. He was addressing Amrit Mahotsava celebrations marking the 75th birth anniversary of Dr Basavalinga Pattadevaru Mahaswamiji of Hiremath Samsthan at Sri Channabasavashram in Bhalki, Bidar. Governor Thaawar Chand Gehlot and minister Eshwar Khandre were among those present.

Radhakrishnan said his differences with Kharge pertain to "vision" but otherwise has no problem with him and considers Kharge a good friend.

During a press conference in Chennai Tuesday, Kharge referred to Modi as a terrorist while criticising AIADMK's alliance with BJP. He later clarified that he meant the "PM was terrorising the democratic fabric of the country". TNN

GP elections delimitation draft out, 94k seats fixed

Picture for representation

FIVE BIGGEST
District | GPs | Members
Belagavi | 497 | 8,413
Tumakuru | 329 | 5,228
Kalaburagi | 260 | 4,429
Vijayapura | 211 | 3,949
Mandya | 229 | 3,789
Source: Karnataka Panchayat Raj Delimitation Commission

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Bengaluru: The govt has issued draft notifications fixing the number of elected members in gram panchayats (GPs) across all 31 districts, marking a key step towards conducting rural local body elections.

The notifications, released by Karnataka Panchayat Raj Delimitation Commission, propose a total 94,081 members for over 5,700 GPs. The public has time to submit objections until Friday. A hearing has been scheduled for Monday (April 27) in Bengaluru where objections will be examined before final notification.

The draft reveals Belagavi district has been allocated the highest number of members at 8,413 across 497 gram panchayats, followed by Tumakuru district with 5,228 members in 329 GPs. Kodagu has the lowest allocation, with 1,200 members across 102 GPs.

Bengaluru Urban district, which has 85 GPs, has been assigned 2,047 members and remains the only district with fewer than 100 GPs.

The commission has allowed submission of objections through the rural development and panchayat raj department portal or by post to its Bengaluru office, while insisting representations received after the deadline will not be considered.

N Nomesh Kumar, director, panchayat raj-I and ex-officio member of the commission, said after the final notification, the govt will take up the process of determining reservations for SCs, STs, OBCs and women, a necessary step before elections can be conducted.

The exercise is aimed at rationalising representation in rural local bodies and ensuring balanced governance at the grassroots level.

Gram panchayats elections, originally due in Jan 2026 after the expiry of the five-year term, have been delayed. The previous elections were held in two phases — on Dec 22 and 27, 2020, covering over 5,700 GPs and around 93,000 wards.

At present, administrators appointed by district deputy commissioners are managing day-to-day affairs of these gram panchayats in the state.

STUDENT UNION POLLS

Rules to be based on Lyngdoh panel norms

Bengaluru: The govt Wednesday said it will use the Lyngdoh Committee report to frame guidelines to revive student union elections in Karnataka. Sharanprakash Patil, medical education minister, and cabinet colleague MC Sudhakar, who holds the higher education porfolio, told representatives of political parties, student wings and independents the govt will only make small changes to suit current conditions.

The committee was set up following a Dec 2, 2005, Supreme Court order under former chief election commissioner JM Lyngdoh to examine guidelines for student body elections. It submitted its report on May 26, 2006, and the apex court, on Sep 22, 2006, directed the human resources development ministry to implement its recommendations.

During Wednesday's interaction in Bengaluru, students and aspiring candidates raised questions on eligibility criteria. Members of Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad sought a minimum 60% attendance rule and no pending FIRs or academic backlogs for candidates.

Representatives of National Students' Union of India and Vidyarthi Janata Dal Secular opposed blanket disqualification based on FIRs, arguing that students often face cases during pro-Kannada protests. TNN

Dutch mats go to Delhi, state eyes pan-India market push

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

TOI

WITH EVERY FIBRE: CM Siddaramaiah, who flagged off trucks carrying a consignment to Delhi, was treated to a demonstration of how the mats are produced, in Bengaluru on Wednesday

Bengaluru: Karnataka State Coir Development Corporation Ltd (KSCDCL) has begun supplying its coir mats, popularly known as 'Dutch mats', to Delhi, marking a push to expand beyond the state and tap national markets.

Chief minister Siddaramaiah Wednesday flagged off the first consignment from his official residence, where a live demonstration of mat-making was also held.

Nataraj Janakiram, chairman, KSCDCL, told **TOI**: "The aim is to promote Karnataka's coir products, support local artisans and strengthen the corporation's presence in national markets."

The corporation runs 35 production units and provides employment to some 700 rural workers, aligned with the govt's focus on livelihood generation. "To boost sales, we have launched a website, coirkarnataka.in, and partnered with a digital marketing platform through the e-commerce portal, coirempower.com. We plan to appoint stockists and agents in other states including Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Madhya Pradesh, and J&K," Janakiram said.

He said Dutch mats, made from fibre extracted from coconut husk, remain one of the corporation's most popular products. The term goes back to the 18th century, when such mats produced in India and Sri Lanka were exported to Europe by Dutch traders.

Janakiram said the expansion is expected to generate more employment for rural women. "A woman can prepare 10 to 12 mats a day. We now pay Rs 40 per mat, up from Rs 10 earlier," he said.

Won't cede control over temples: Govt

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TOI

FUND FLOW: Private players can adopt and develop temples

Bengaluru: Amid a debate on faith and fundamental rights spurred by the Sabarimala case before the Supreme Court, the state govt has decided to invite private players to develop and maintain temples, while insisting that it will not relinquish control, especially over smaller ones.

The decision marks a big shift from the 2021 announcement by then chief minister Basavaraj Bommai of BJP that temples would be freed of govt control.

Officials say the decision is driven less by revenue considerations and more by concerns over potential legal disputes. "If the govt relinquishes control then there will be chaos in most temples as a majority of them may end up in civil disputes or have segregation rules for devotees to enter the temples," R Ramalinga Reddy, muzrai minister, told **TOI**.

The state has 205 Grade A temples with annual income above Rs 25 lakh; 193 Grade B temples earning between Rs 5 lakh and Rs 25 lakh; and 34,168 Grade C temples with income below Rs 5 lakh.

Reddy said the govt is open to private donors, mutts and companies adopting temples. "But we have received a very lukewarm response till date," he said. Officials say most donors prefer contributing to larger temples, leaving smaller, rural shrines underfunded. Muzrai department sources say many Grade C temples, often located in hinterlands and associated with local deities, fail to attract attention due to social and religious factors.

To support them, the govt provides an annual grant of Rs 72,000 each. "But the govt does not interfere in their daily religious activities," officials said.

Cong not the only option: Ulemas

A set of Ulema Imams and Khateebs lambasted Congress for their action against MLCs Abdul Jabbar and Naseer Ahmed, saying Congress is governing Karnataka "only because of Muslim votes" consolidating in its favour. "It is not that Muslims have no option besides Congress. We have options which can be accessed in 2028," said the Ulemas. They said Congress "is crossing all lines" by taking the community for granted and demanded reinstating Jabbar and Ahmed.

MLC polls: JD(S) upset with BJP

JD(S) youth wing state president Nikhil Kumaraswamy lashed out at ally BJP for unilaterally announcing candidates for upcoming legislative council polls. Nikhil said Union minister and JD(S) state president HD Kumaraswamy is pursuing the issue with BJP's high command. "We expect a response soon," he said. The polls are likely in Nov for West Graduates, South-East Graduates, North-East Teachers and Bengaluru Teachers seats. During meetings, JD(S) had initially sought the South-East Graduates and Bengaluru Teachers seats, but BJP went ahead and named three candidates.

New guidelines to curb child labour

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Citing gaps in compliance in some districts, the labour department has rolled out a fresh set of guidelines to crack down on child and adolescent labour across the state.

A directive issued by HN Gopalakrishna, labour commissioner, states officials are instructed to form inspection teams at the hobli level and conduct a minimum of 15 checks every month. District and taluk-level task forces, led by deputy commissioners and tahsildars respectively, should oversee surprise raids and ensure violations are promptly addressed with legal action.

The directive stresses rehabilitation. Children rescued during inspections should be enrolled in schools or accommodated in residential institutions run by social welfare and other departments. The govt allows direct admission for such children into state-run residential schools without entrance tests to ensure continuity in education.

To improve monitoring, the department has mandated periodic meetings of district and taluk committees and directed officials to actively use complaint platforms such as helpline 1098, police services and online grievance portals to track and respond to cases.

Ensuring awareness is a key component of the strategy. Officials have been asked to organise campaigns in June to mark World Day Against Child Labour and hold special programmes on Children's Day in Nov. Educational institutions and local bodies should conduct outreach activities, competitions and pledge drives to discourage child labour practices.

The department also outlined strict financial measures, including recovery of fines from violators and depositing compensation into rehabilitation funds for rescued children. It emphasised accountability, directing officials to submit regular reports.

However, Nagasimha G Rao, child rights activist, said the department issues directives every year. The challenge, he said, is in implementing directives.

"Eradicating child labour cannot be the responsibility of the labour department alone," said Rao. "All departments must collaborate and implement a coordinated, multi-sectoral action plan."

Flight held up for 1.5 hrs over Hubballi

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Hubballi: Fly91 flight from Bengaluru to Hubballi, , with 21 passengers on board, was held in the air for over one hour due to bad weather on Tuesday night. It landed safely at 9.40pm at Hubballi.

Confirming the same, airport director Rupesh Kumar said monsoon weather was a hurdle for the flight's landing.

"Flight IC3412 Bengaluru to Hubballi was scheduled to land here at 8.15pm, but it landed by 9.42pm. Except bad weather, no other hurdle was witnessed," he added.

Sources in FLY91 too said only bad weather was the reason to hold the flight in the air.

It may be recalled here that another FLY91 flight, arriving from Hyderabad on April 19, was diverted to Bengaluru after three hours hovering in the sky.

Dept probe begins only on issuance of chargesheet: HC

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: A departmental inquiry can be said to commence only upon issuance of a chargesheet, not by a mere act of suspension or issuance of a show-cause notice, the Karnataka high court has held while revoking suspension of Shankar Yamanappa Talawar, a stenographer with Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board.

Talawar was transferred on Dec 13, 2022, to office of executive engineer, Davangere zonal office. He suffered a cardiac arrest and was operated upon at a hospital. On Dec 19, 2022, he was placed under suspension over allegations of financial irregularities committed along with other officials. However, the chargesheet was not issued against him. After 6 months, Talawar submitted a representation in June 2023 seeking revocation of suspension. He continued to remain under suspension for more than two years. When he questioned the same before the high court, KIADB issued a show-cause notice and initiated departmental inquiry against him for non-payment of Rs 80 lakh compensation to a landowner. Talawar challenged the chargesheet and departmental inquiry, citing delay.

Justice M Nagaprasanna noted that under the amended Rule 10(5)(b) of Karnataka Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, suspension beyond 6 months demanded a reasoned decision by the competent authority. "The petitioner's suspension cannot be permitted to subsist any longer, and must necessarily be revoked. KIADB (is directed) to give posting to the petitioner as his suspension is deemed to have been revoked from date of expiry of six months. The petitioner shall be entitled to all consequential benefits," the judge ordered.

Driver, wife found dead in bedroom

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: A 35-year-old driver and his wife were found dead under mysterious circumstances inside their Ambedkarnagar residence in RT Nagar Wednesday afternoon.

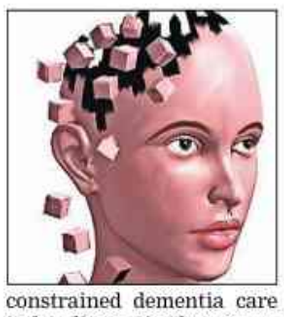
The deceased were identified as David J and Sumitra David, 30. Married nine years ago, the couple had two minor children.

The incident came to light when neighbours, after receiving no response from the locked door, peeped through the window and found them dead. David was hanging from the ceiling fan while Sumitra was lying dead on the bed. Their children were in David's brother's house.

"Family members told us that the couple would fight regularly over domestic issues. We have to wait for the autopsy report to see whether both died of hanging or Sumitra was smothered before," an investigating officer said.

IISc brain research centre launches ₹2cr AI challenge

TIMES NEWS NETWORK



Bengaluru: Seeking to close a critical gap in early diagnosis of dementia, the Centre for Brain Research (CBR) at Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has launched a nationwide artificial intelligence (AI) challenge that will use large-scale brain ageing datasets, including longitudinal data from India.

The six-month challenge, being conducted with the Alzheimer's Disease Data Initiative and Microsoft Research India, will see Rs 2 crore in prizes and grants. It is open to researchers and innovators affiliated with Indian institutions, who are invited to build models that can predict the onset of mild cognitive impairment or dementia, and track how these conditions progress.

A problem that has long constrained dementia care is that diagnosis often comes late, when intervention options are limited. "Early detection of the onset of cognitive decline can lead to scalable and affordable intervention strategies that can benefit senior citizens in the country," CBR director Prof KVS Hari said, adding that AI could help "unravel hidden connections" in how cognitive decline develops.

The challenge is designed to go beyond single-source data analysis. Participants will work with multimodal datasets, which may include clinical records, imaging data and cognitive assessments collected over time. Such longitudinal datasets are relatively scarce in India, and researchers say they are crucial for understanding how brain health changes across ageing populations in local contexts.

Backers of the initiative say it also reflects a shift towards collaborative, data-driven research. Kris Gopalakrishnan, chairman, Axilor Ventures, and trustee of Pratiksha Trust, said advances in AI must be applied across prediction, research and treatment.

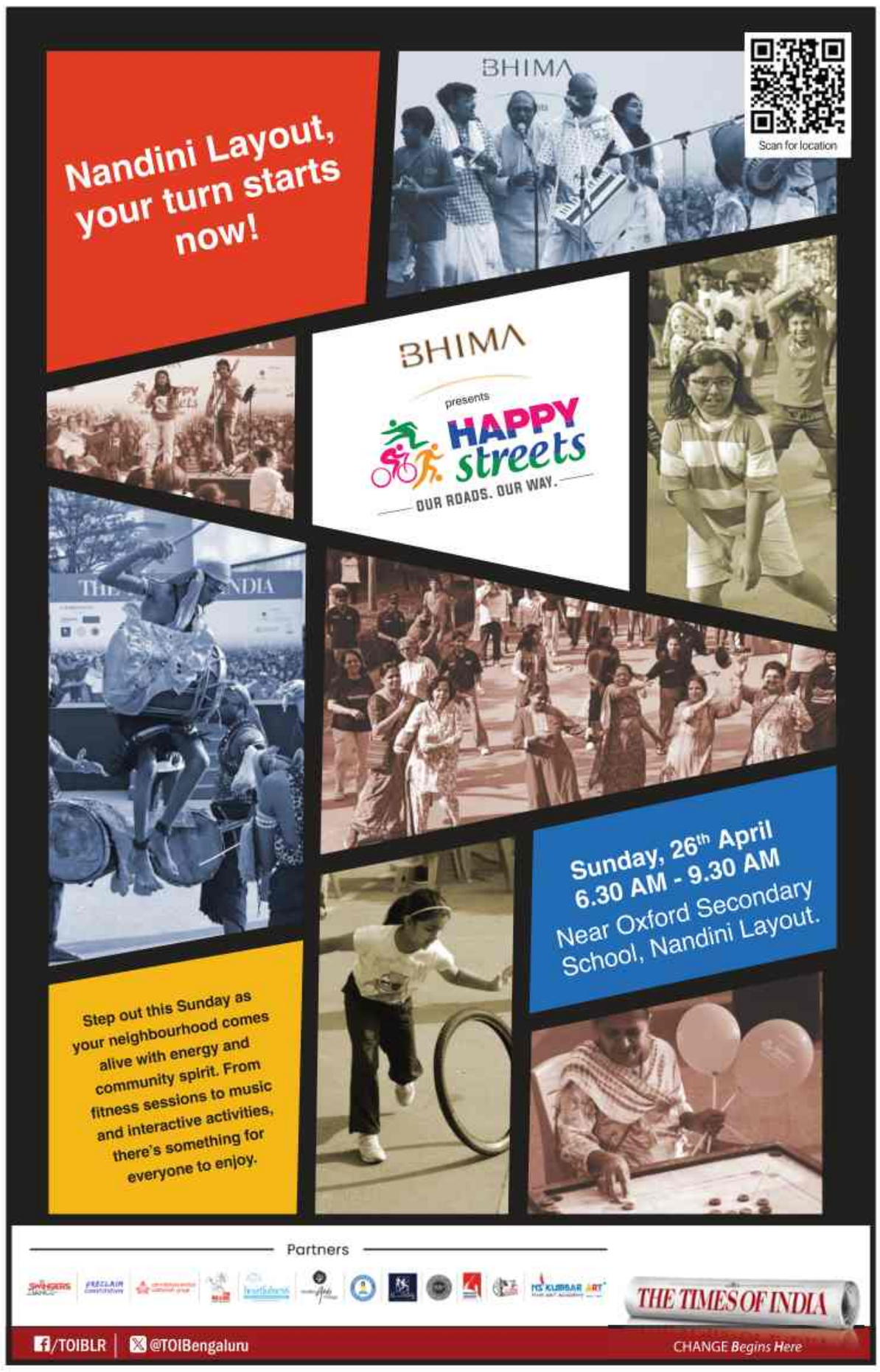
Submissions will be accepted till May 20. Winners will receive a mix of cash prizes and research grants worth Rs 2 crore.

Man's death in Bidar not from sunstroke: DHO

Bidar: The district health officer (DHO) here Wednesday said the death of 20-year-old Mohammed Sameer was not due to sunstroke but due to illness caused by alcohol addiction. Laik Ahmed, a native of Uttar Pradesh, filed a complaint on Monday with Kamalanagar police station saying his son Mohammed Sameer, 20, died after sunstroke. TNN

Screening space at French centre named after SL Bhyrappa

Bengaluru: Ambassador of France to India, Thierry Mathou, Wednesday inaugurated a screening space named after Kannada writer SL Bhyrappa at Alliance Francaise de Bangalore. Mathou also inaugurated a renovated library and media centre named after French writer Simone de Beauvoir. TNN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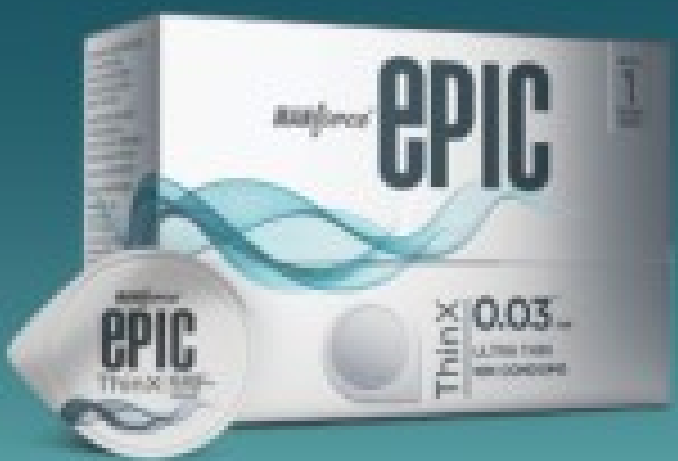

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TIMES NATION

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2026

CONG & ITS NETAS HAVE BECOME MENTALLY BANKRUPT, SAYS DELHI CM REKHA GUPTA ON KHARGE'S TERRORIST REMARK

ANDHRA CM NAIDU WILL LAY FOUNDATION FOR ₹5,400CR RENEW SOLAR FACILITY NEAR VISAKHAPATNAM TODAY

HACK OF THE DAY — **SWAP PASSWORDS FOR PASSKEYS WHERE POSSIBLE**

WHAT IT SOLVES: Makes sign-in both easier and harder to phish by replacing passwords with your device unlock, such as your PIN, face, or fingerprint

WHAT TO DO: Use Google Password Manager to create passkeys for sites and apps that support them

STEPS:

1. **Open** a site or app that offers passkey sign-in
2. **Choose** the option to create or save a passkey
3. **Approve** it with your phone screen lock or device authentication
4. **Store** the passkey in Google Password Manager
5. **Use** the passkey the next time instead of typing a password

CAREFUL: Do not create passkeys on shared devices. The whole point is that your device unlock becomes your sign-in key

SCAN FOR MORE

Hacks are based on verified public sources. Readers are advised to follow official websites & updated rules

Difficult for courts to usher in social or religious reforms: SC

But Can Adjudicate Validity Of Reform Legislations, It Adds

Dhananjay.Mahapatra @timesofindia.com

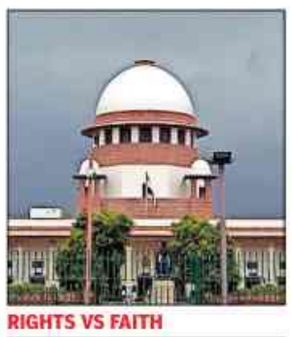
New Delhi: A nine-judge Supreme Court bench led by CJI Surya Kant on Wednesday said that it would be difficult for the judiciary to bring in social reforms, and added that govts were better equipped to enact laws in response to genuine demands from people.

This remark came when senior advocate Gopal Subramanium told the bench of the CJI, Justices B V Nagarathna, M M Sundresh, Ahsanuddin Amanullah, Aravind Kumar, A G Masih, P B Varale, R Mahadevan, and J Bagchi that a devotee's personal faith and belief were non-justiciable and that even the govt in the name of social reform could not impinge on the religious rights of a denomination or community.

"Social reforms and religious reforms come with people's will and desire to which the govt responds (by bringing a legislation). But it is very difficult for the court to act on such issues (social or religious reforms). Courts can adjudicate the validity of a social reform legislation by testing whether it intrudes into faith or religious beliefs of devotees."

The significant observation acknowledging the court's limitations in playing social reformer came on the seventh day of the hearing on the fundamental rights versus faith issue.

The bench continued to express its reservations and doubts over the judicial oversight of religious issues. Justice Kumar asked, "Can the courts adjudicate a dispute over a religious practice between two groups within the same denomination or a temple? What could be the juridical basis for a constitutional court while entertaining a writ petition or a PIL to decide whether one type of religious practice is more desirable?"



RIGHTS VS FAITH

Justice Sundresh said it appeared that apart from three constitutionally specified grounds — public order, morality and health — there was no other ground, even the violation of fundamental rights, to restrict a person's right to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate a religion.

Appearing for Sabarimala Karma Samiti general secretary, senior advocate C A Sundaram said the constitutional or legal views of the court were immaterial to the devotees' conscientiously and genuinely held religious beliefs and practices to worship God, which is protected as a fundamental right under Article 25.

Faulting the 2018 judgment for wrongly applying the equality and non-discrimination test to the religious custom at Sabarimala Ayyappa temple, Sundaram said that the right to equality applied to govt employment and could not be a tool to strike down a long-standing religious custom intrinsically connected to people's belief and faith about the attributes of the deity.

Senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi said the judiciary should adopt a hands-off approach towards religious matters in which govt can regulate certain aspects only on three grounds of public order, morality and health. Arguments will continue Thursday.

HC judge recuses from hearing PIL against Kejriwal

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

The PIL alleged it's AAP netas' 'dirty strategy' to record Kejriwal's hearing before Justice Sharma on April 13, which was shared on social media to malign court's image

New Delhi: A Delhi high court judge Wednesday recused himself from hearing a PIL seeking contempt action against AAP's Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia & others for allegedly uploading and sharing clips of proceedings on the former CM's arguments during liquor policy case.

Justice Tejas Karia opted out of hearing the plea filed by advocate Vaibhav Singh that was listed before a bench comprising him and chief justice D K Upadhyaya.

Justice Karia, a former partner at a leading law firm, represented Meta in several cases before his elevation as a judge, including in a similar plea filed by Singh a few years ago against uploading of court hearing videos. The latest plea has made AAP members parties, apart from HC administration, Meta, X & Google.

It argues that unauthorised sharing of court recordings on social media can undermine the independence of judiciary and is also prohibited under high court rules.

Several AAP politicians and members of various other opposition parties, "intentionally and deliberately recorded and circulated" videos of Kejriwal's appearance before Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma on April 13 on social media with the intention to malign the image of the court in the eyes of the public, the plea said.

Alleging Kejriwal and his party colleagues hatched a "conspiracy" and "dirty strategy" to record the proceedings, the PIL urged that an SIT probe the matter and contempt proceedings be initiated against "all respondents.

Boy, 5, helps nail mom for dad's murder

A five-year-old boy's testimony led to the conviction of his mother and her lover for the murder of his father on Aug 27, 2024, in UP's Hapur district. The court also slapped a fine of Rs 50,000 each on the convicts. Mohd Imran, 32, a daily wager, was found dead in his home in Chhapkauli village with no visible injuries. But injuries were found in autopsy. "Ammi (mother) grabbed abbu's (father) legs, Sameer uncle sat on him, punched him several times in the chest," Mohd Vihaan told the court. TNN

STATOISTICS A slice of life in numbers

What China's youth have and India's do not

Out of 185 territories*, only 72 have an operational youth employment strategy, China being one of them. Others like India and Pakistan are among those (36%) which have formulated a plan but have not operationalised it

No. of countries* with policies for youth employment

*Some 'reporting areas' are territories, not sovereign nations; Source: UN

Delhi HC finds litigant guilty of contempt for videos attacking judges

Abhinav.Garg@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: A litigant who posted online content against three judges has been held guilty of contempt by Delhi high court, which said the videos "personally attacked" certain judicial officers and "lowered" the dignity of the judicial system.

Gulshan Pahuja's content on his channel 'Fight 4 Judicial Reforms' was not protected as "free speech", HC said. While a disgruntled litigant may sometimes vent his frustration by making "uncharitable remarks", which are to be "taken in our stride", it can't "mock" the system.

"If one has to attack a judicial officer on his integrity or competence, it must be done with cogent evidence. It cannot be made lightly. We must remember that such an attack, if made without any basis, undermines the authority of the judicial officer and interferes with the dispensation of justice by him/her without fear or favour. Any such criticism must, therefore, be well-founded, specially because the judicial officer, unlike the complainant, has no means to justify his actions in public," HC observed.

It noted that Pahuja "personally attacked three district court judges" and claimed that if a litigant's case is before them, he should give up any hope for justice. It was done to "create sensationalism and distrust against the two named judicial officers".

"What is the foundation of such sweeping remarks against the judicial officers?...Pahuja pronounced his verdict against the judicial officers without any basis.... This is a classic case of criminal contempt," the court said.

Bihar police order action against 50 cops for filming reels in uniforms

Patna: The uniform comes with discipline — and now, Bihar Police department is making that point clear in the age of reels and social media addiction. The police headquarters ordered action against 50 personnel caught making and posting videos while in uniform, **reports Kshitiz**.

This is meant to nip in the bud a growing trend where policemen, often in uniform, post content on social media. Despite an existing ban issued by director general of police, compliance has remained patchy.

According to official communication, monitoring by Internet Media Centre at police headquarters revealed "continuous posting of reels in uniform", which was deemed detrimental to departmental dignity. Action on erring cops will be decided by SPs concerned.

"This step is necessary to uphold departmental discipline and the honour of the uniform," a senior officer said.

2 killed in J'khand elephant attacks

A labourer (30) and a boy (10) were killed while his wife was injured in attacks by an elephant herd in two brick kilns in Jharkhand's Koderma district Tuesday night, police said. Forest officials have provided immediate compensation of Rs 25,000 each to the bereaved families. Seven people have died in elephant attacks in the past one month. TNN

Sr official's daughter raped & killed at Delhi home by ex-help

Suspect Fired 6 Wks Ago, Came To Steal: Cops

Raj Shekhar Jha & Abhay | TNN

New Delhi: The 22-year-old daughter of a senior bureaucrat was sexually assaulted and killed at her south Delhi home Wednesday. Her head was smashed with a heavy object and she was strangled to death with a mobile phone charging cable, police said.

Police arrested a 23-year-old man from a hotel in Dwarka within 12 hours of the crime. The suspect was a former domestic worker who had been fired six weeks ago for "financial misconduct". He had returned for vengeance and money, police said.

The suspect ransacked the victim's house and fled with Rs 2.5 lakh in cash and some valuables. Joint CP (south) Vijay Kumar said he has been booked for rape, murder and robbery.

MOLESTED ANOTHER WOMAN IN RAJ: COPS

- Suspect **entered house with a spare key kept outside** after woman's parents went for walk and gym around 6am
- He hit the woman with a heavy object, **strangled her with a phone charging cable**
- Couple came back to find **daughter lying in pool of blood**
- Suspect **seen leaving house** by another domestic worker
- **Cops confirm woman was sexually assaulted**, say suspect had also molested a woman in Rajasthan Tuesday

The incident took place around 6.40am. "Her parents had gone for their gym session. A spare key was left outside the flat for the house help, who would usually come around 6.30-7am," Kumar said. The suspect was aware of the family's routine as well as the key location. "He entered the house and attacked the woman, who was sleeping, with a blunt object and then strangled her with a cable," said an officer.

The family told police that they found their daughter in a pool of blood once they returned home around 8am. She was bleeding excessively so they rushed her to Fortis hospital and police were informed. The suspect stayed inside the house for about 40 minutes, with CCTV recording his exit at 7.22am.

Police will produce the suspect in court Thursday and seek remand for interrogation regarding the motive and recovery of looted valuables. Police said the suspect was recommended by a colleague of the woman's father about a year ago. The colleague later informed him about his vices and his gambling addiction. The suspect was also in the habit of misappropriating money given for household expenditure.

No interim bail to TCS employee in another sex harassment case

Nashik: A TCS Nashik office staffer, arrested for allegedly sexually exploiting a co-worker on the promise of marrying her, was denied interim bail Wednesday by a sessions court in another case of sexual harassment and religious coercion lodged by a male co-worker, **reports Santosh Sonawane**.

The applicant (31), a team leader, is lodged in Nashik Road Central Prison under judicial custody. He was arrested in the first of the total nine cases of sexual offences and religious coercion at the company's office.

Public prosecutor Kiran Bendbhar said since the alleged crime was of serious nature, she needed time to file a response to the bail plea. She submitted that the complainant was under severe stress owing to the behaviour of the accused who also hurt his religious feelings.

Tribunals reject 510 appeals; voters need to seek fresh enrolment

▶ Continued from page 1

Among 139 cleared is 88-year-old Suprabuddha Sen, maternal grandson of Nandalal Bose, who illustrated the original Constitution manuscript. Sen is unlikely to vote due to ill-health and missed the window for home voting. His wife Deepa Sen, 82, and

BENGAL SIR

caretaker Chakradhar Nayek — both cleared — are likely to vote at Visva Bharati Staff Club in Santiniketan. The eight deleted can't file Form 6 for reenrolment and must approach Calcutta HC or Supreme Court, Agarwal said.

Tribunals have also rejected 510 appeals as incorrect applications. Those applicants must seek fresh enrolment through Form 6.

Legal challenge intensified Wednesday. A PIL in Calcutta high court sought intervention in the functioning of 19 tribunals and disclosure of their standard operating procedure, prepared by a panel of three HC judges. A division bench led by chief justice Sujoy Paul declined to hear it, directing petitioners to Supreme Court since tribunals were set up under apex court orders.

Data released Wednesday underscored the scale of exclusions. In high-minority Samsherganj in Murshidabad — highest deletions after judicial scrutiny at 74,775 and 91,712 across SIR stages — only one appellant, Dhuliyan municipality chairman Mohammad Injamul Islam, had voting rights restored.

Goal was to finish, says Barwal

▶ Continued from page 1

He finished 20th, but history tilted. Next target is consistency at global level, with Asian Games on horizon. The turnaround began in 2024 at Army Sports Institute. Coaches assessed his VO2 max — essentially the ceiling of aerobic capacity, indicating how much oxygen muscles can use during sustained effort. High scores often signal endurance potential. Barwal's numbers were exceptional.

"Combined with his running economy and discipline, it was clear he had the physiological profile of a high-performance marathoner," an official from the institute said Wednesday.

Barwal, 28, a havildar, had built his career over 5,000m and 10,000m, consistent domestically but short of a global breakthrough. The institute's call was to shift him up — from track to 42.195km — where aerobic efficiency outweighs raw speed. "Finishing was the goal. Breaking a record wasn't," Barwal said.

Rotterdam turned into a test of both science and will. Start temperature hovered near 12°C and dropped to about 7°C by the finish. In final 400m, Barwal's body gave way.

"I was freezing and completely drained. No energy left. I collapsed a few metres before finish," he said. He got up, crossed the line — and likely lost minutes in that stumble. The clock still stopped at a national milestone.

Barwal's endurance roots run deeper than lab readings. He grew up in a Uttarakhand village, walking nearly 6km daily to school across hilly terrain — conditioning long before structured training. Local race wins led to an Army sports quota entry in Bengal Engineer Group, Roorkee, in 2019.

For Barwal, science rewired a career. Numbers spotted what instinct hadn't. A higher ceiling, a longer road — and a finish line that arrived with a fall, a rise, and a record.

CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS

CORRIGENDUM

Tender No. 73261001, Date: 16.04.2026

A corrigendum has been issued against **Tender Case No. 73261001**, letter dated / published on website **31.03.2026** with **Tender Opening Date: 30.04.2026**, for procurement of **"Supply of Spherilock for different types of locomotives as per requirement of different Zonal Railways."** At the time of tender publication, **no demand was received from NER**. Subsequently, a demand of **1394 Nos.** has been received from **NER**. Therefore, the tender quantity has been enhanced accordingly. The revised quantity details are as follows: **PL No.** 29100203. **Earlier Quantity:** 36926 Nos. **Revised Present Quantity: 38320 Nos.**

PR1/329 AMM/HQ-II/CLW/Chittaranjan

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PWD/RDN/TS-4/TN/2026-27/156 Date:10-04-2026

Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Short Term Tender Notification -(KW- 1, 2,3 & 4)

1) Notification No & Date: PWD/RDN/TS-4/TN/2026-27/156 Date: 10-04-2026 **2)Name of work's:** Raichur District Total 31 work's Raichur, Manvi, Deodurga, Lingasugur & Sindhanur taluk Different types of Buildings, Bridges & Road works. **3) Amount of works Min:** Rs. 338825.33 Max Rs. 104581783.65 **4) EMD Amount Min:** Rs. 8500.00 Max Rs. 1500000.00 **5) Period (including Manson):** Min 1 (One) Month Max 11 (Eleven) Months **6) Last Date and Time for Receipt of Tender:** 27/04/2026 16:00:00 **7) Date and Time for Opening of Tender:** 28/04/2026 16:30:00

Due to any reasons dates, retender any other changes will be notified in the KPPP Portal only No separate paper notification will be issued & For More details visit this website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/

Sd/- EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
PWD Division, RAICHUR.

DIP/RCR/33/KSMCA/35/2026-27

ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ
ರಾಜ್ಯ ಹೆದ್ದಾರಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಯೋಜನೆ
ಮುಖ್ಯ ಯೋಜನಾಧಿಕಾರಿರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ,
ಯೋಜನಾ ಅನುಷ್ಠಾನ ಘಟಕ, ರಾಜ್ಯ ಹೆದ್ದಾರಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಯೋಜನೆ,
ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಪೂರಕ ಕಟ್ಟಡ, ಕೆ.ಆರ್.ವೃತ್ತ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು-560001.
ದೂರವಾಣಿ: 080-22224106 ಇ-ಮೇಲ್: cposhdp2020@gmail.com

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಮುಯೋಅ/ಯೋಅಫ/ರಾಹೆಅಯೋ/ಖಾವಾ/ಕಾಇಂ-02/ಸಕಾಇಂ-03/2026-27 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 18.04.2026

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನ ಪತ್ರ -01/2026-27(ಎರಡನೇ ಕರೆ)

(ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಮಾತ್ರ)

ಮುಖ್ಯ ಯೋಜನಾಧಿಕಾರಿಯವರ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಯೋಜನಾ ಅನುಷ್ಠಾನ ಘಟಕ, ರಾಜ್ಯ ಹೆದ್ದಾರಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಯೋಜನೆ, ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಆನೆಕ್ಸ್ ಕಟ್ಟಡ, ನೆಲ ಮಹಡಿ, ಕೆ.ಆರ್.ವೃತ್ತ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು-560001 ರವರ ಕಛೇರಿಗೆ 07 ವಾಹನ (ಕಾರು)ಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಮಾಸಿಕ ದರ ಬಾಡಿಗೆ ಆಧಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಒದಗಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, (1) ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಗಳನ್ನು ದಿನಾಂಕ: 22.04.2026 ರಂದು ಸಂಜೆ 5.00 ಗಂಟೆಯಿಂದ ಡೌನ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. (2) ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ: 08.05.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 4.30 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ. (3) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ: 11.05.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 5.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ. (4) ಆರ್ಹ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ: 21.05.2026 ಬೆಳಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಈ ಕಛೇರಿಯನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/- ಅಧೀಕ್ಷಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು, ಯೋಜನಾ ಅನುಷ್ಠಾನ ಘಟಕ, ರಾಜ್ಯ ಹೆದ್ದಾರಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಯೋಜನೆ, ಕೆ.ಆರ್.ವೃತ್ತ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ನಗರ ನೀರು ಸರಬರಾಜು ಮತ್ತು ಒಳಚರಂಡಿ ಮಂಡಳಿ
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ಕನನೀಸ ಮತ್ತು ಒಚ ಮಂಡಳಿ, ವಿಭಾಗ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ. ದೂರವಾಣಿ : ಫ್ಯಾಕ್ಸ್ 08232-224816. e mail- kwbeemnd@gmail.com

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:-ಕಜಮ/ಕಾಅ/ಮಂಡ್ಯ/ತಾಂ.ಶಾ/ತಾಂ.ಸ/ಸ.ಅ/49/2026-27 ದಿನಾಂಕ:10.04.2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ

ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಮಂಡ್ಯರವರ ಠೇವಣಿ ಕೊಡುಗೆ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ ಅಡಿ ಮಂಡ್ಯ ನಗರದ ಕೆರೆ ಅಂಗಳದಲ್ಲಿನ ಕೆ.ಹೆಚ್.ಬಿ.ಬಡಾವಣೆಗೆ ಮಂಡ್ಯ ನಗರ ನೀರು ಸರಬರಾಜು ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಯಿಂದ ಕಾವೇರಿ ಕುಡಿಯುವ ನೀರಿನ ಸೌಲಭ್ಯವನ್ನು ಕಲ್ಪಿಸುವ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ. ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂ:KUWSDB/2026-27/WS/WORK_INDENT501 ಗೆ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪಬ್ಲಿಕ್ ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ **ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಮೊತ್ತ: ರೂ.78,10,263/-**

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ಪಾಪ್ರಸಂಖ್ಯೆ/ಕಬ-ಮಂ/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಸಿಎ/033/2026-27

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Tenders can be downloaded from 18-04-2026 to 28.04.2026 @ 5.30 PM. Pre-bid Meeting on 23.04.2026 @11.00 AM. The date of opening of technical bid is on 30.04.2026 @11.00 AM and commercial bid opening is on 30.04.2026 @ 12.00 PM onwards at Managing Director office. For further details contact e-procurement web site www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in No. 080-25501216/25501227, 9964390489 Managing Director reserves the right to accept or reject the tender without assigning any reason and Managing Director decision in this regard is final and binding.

Sd/-GENERAL MANAGER

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2. **Parking & Pay and Use:** 24.04.2026, 28.04.2026, 05.05.2026, 20.05.2026, 21.05.2026, 27.05.2026, 28.05.2026
3. **Parcel:** 24.04.2026, 07.05.2026, 08.05.2026, 14.05.2026, 15.05.2026
4. **Advertising, ATM & Misc:** 24.04.2026, 28.04.2026, 11.05.2026, 12.05.2026, 13.05.2026, 14.05.2026, 15.05.2026, 18.05.2026, 19.05.2026, 25.05.2026, 26.05.2026,

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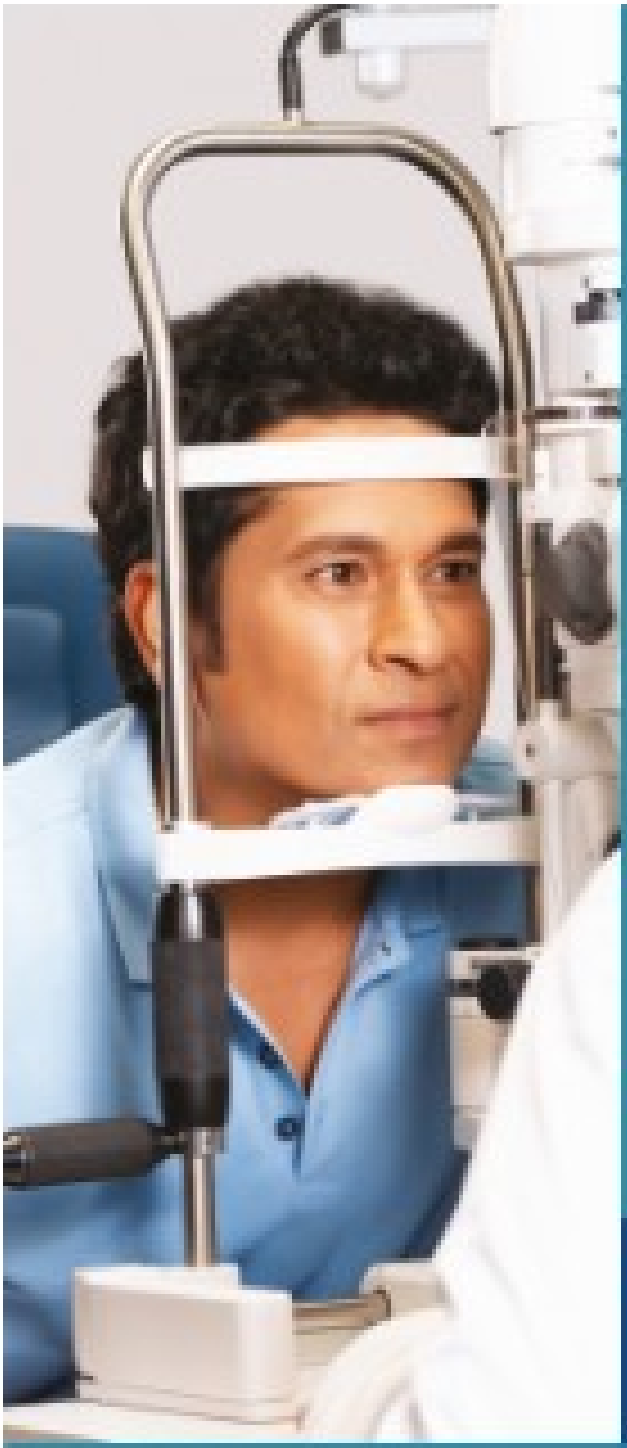

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Ballot Units Sent To Polling Stations Amid Tight Vigil

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

ANI
Election officials and police personnel supervising loading of EVMs and other materials onto trucks ahead of polls, in Thanjavur on Wednesday

Chennai: As political parties went silent on Wednesday after the month-long campaign, Election Commission went into high gear giving the final push to ensure smooth polling across Tamil Nadu on Thursday. Electronic voting machines were despatched to polling stations under tight security, while flying squads stepped up vigil to prevent last-minute cash distribution.

Chief electoral officer Archana Patnaik said 300 companies of paramilitary forces and more than 83,800 police personnel have been deployed to guard polling stations statewide. EC officials undertook a 65-km uphill journey from Theni to move ballot units to a remote polling booth at Vellimalai Estate in Varusanadu under the Andipatti assembly segment, catering to just five voters. For the Oothukadu polling station in Bodinayakanur, which has 307 voters but no motorable access, EVMs were carried on horseback through forests.

Meanwhile, transport hubs saw heavy crowds as voters travelled back to their native places to cast votes. Several voters also arrived from abroad to participate in the election process.

Delegates from multiple countries also visited Chennai under the international election visitors programme to study the polling process.

Sans curbing mechanism, campaigns continue digitally

With campaigning prohibited during the silence period before polls, all political parties went quiet on Wednesday. However, in the absence of an effective curbing mechanism by ECI, canvassing on social media continued. Digital campaigns with candidates' visuals kept popping up on netizens' Instagram, WhatsApp and X feeds, seeking votes.

Under Sections 126, 126A and 135C of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, all election-related activities intended or likely to influence or affect the results of an election are banned during the silence period. Violations may lead to imprisonment up to six months, a fine, or both.

If candidates or parties are found canvassing from their official handles, the candidate will receive a warning first. If the offence is serious, they will be barred from campaigning. This, however, failed to deter several parties from using their IT wing or fan accounts to trend videos with Tamil songs and hashtags. In some cases, a few creators made independent reels, using candidates' voices to seek votes.

ED moved SC seeking relief under Article 32

▶ Continued from page 1

Banerjee, accompanied by the West Bengal DGP, had on Jan 8 interrupted ED's searches at the residence of Pratik Jain, I-PAC's director, and had walked away with files which ED has claimed were crucial for its investigation into the political consultancy's alleged involvement in money laundering.

ED moved Supreme Court alleging Banerjee's action violated its fundamental rights and sought relief under Article 32, which deals with protection from violation of fundamental rights.

Banerjee, represented by a battery of lawyers – Kapil Sibal, A M Singhvi, Shyam Divan, Siddharth Luthra and Menaka Guruswamy – argued that remedies provided for under Article 32 are available only to individual citizens and that ED should pursue its case under the statutory provisions of Bharatiya Nyaya Samhita (BNS). They said it was for Centre to move court under Article 131 which deals with disputes between Centre and state(s).

However, the bench, which termed Banerjee's conduct "extraordinary and unprecedented", did not agree. "How can a situation, where a chief minister walks in the midst of an investigation, be termed as a dispute between the state and the central govt to invoke Article 131?" asked Justices Mishra and Anjaria.

The court said legal issues arising out of the present controversy were not contemplated and conceived by the Constitution makers, making it an unprecedented situation. Guruswamy, besides contending that Article 32 is available only to an individual and not to a govt department, argued that the case involved substantial question of law and it should be adjudicated by a 5-judge constitution bench.

The bench was hearing a plea filed by ED and its officials seeking CBI probe against the CM and others for preventing them from discharging their duty when they had raided premises of I-PAC, which is the political consultant of All India TMC. Earlier, the bench raised questions on how can the central agency approach state authority which is headed by the CM herself when it was contended that ED should have filed FIR if they were prevented from discharging their duty.

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Stalin asks DMK cadre to be cautious on poll day

Chennai: Tamil Nadu chief minister, M K Stalin, said on Tuesday that while public sentiment is strongly in favour of the DMK front, the party's booth committee workers must nevertheless ensure that DMK supporters cast their vote without fail.

"Ensure that every single vote meant for DMK is polled. The hard work of DMK members over the last several days should continue on the polling day too," Stalin said in a letter to DMK cadres. "Booth-level agents should stay vigil on polling day while strictly adhering to rules," he said.

Stalin asked booth agents to arrive at least 90 minutes before polling begins and stay on till voting ended. "Ensure every person standing in queue towards the end of polling gets a token to cast their vote," he said. TNN

Cash for votes? Police detain BJP netas in North 24-Pgs, Malda

Subhro Maitra & Sanjib Chakraborty | TNN

Malda/Kolkata: Allegations surfaced against BJP regarding the distribution of cash to voters in Hingalganj assembly constituency in North 24-Parganas on Wednesday, while party netas were canvassing for BJP candidate Rekha Patra. Sources said local BJP politician Tarun Mondal and former BJP MLA from Assam, Kishore Nath, allegedly handed out cash to residents at a club in Konkonagar, Hingalganj. Police detained both and seized the money and their vehicle.

Nath had come to Hingalganj to campaign for Patra. Local TMC workers demanded their arrest and urged Election Commission (EC) and district administration to take swift action. A senior cop said an investigation was underway. In Malda district, Biplab Das, brother of Chanchal BJP candidate Ratan Das, was detained Tuesday after police recovered Rs 2.8 lakh cash from his two-wheeler during a check near Barai village on Chanchal border. Cops also seized his motorcycle. "My brother deals in the wholesale medicine trade. The cash was for his business and had nothing to do with politics," Ratan Das later claimed. In South Dinajpur, police seized Rs 2 lakh cash from an SUV at Patiram. Sources said the vehicle belonged to a former MP from Tripura.

"Let police and EC investigate how BJP men are ferrying such a large amount of cash. This is only the tip of the iceberg," Trinamool spokesperson Subhamoy Basu said.

ED questions TMC MP for 8 hrs, calls 2 mins tomorrow

Rohit.Khanna@timesofindia.com

Kolkata: Actress and former Trinamool MP Nusrat Jahan Wednesday appeared before ED in connection with a case in which investors in a housing scheme were allegedly defrauded and was questioned for about eight hours.

Asked why she was called as she emerged out of the ED office along with her husband Yash Dasgupta, she said, "You should find out."

The case pertains to an alleged fraud by a company, which had reportedly duped more than 400 senior citizens of Rs 24 crore in 2014-15. The company had reportedly promised 1,000 sq ft flats to them but failed to deliver the flats or return their money. Nusrat had earlier claimed she had quit the company.

Meanwhile, in the alleged municipal recruitment scam, ED has asked state ministers Sujit Bose and Rathin Ghosh to appear before it on Friday.

Tamil cinema makes political stars, but sees no returns: Industry insiders

Neeraja.Ramesh
@timesofindia.com

The leak of Vijay's 'Jana Nayagan', ahead of Tamil Nadu polls, has exposed a compromised supply chain where access is loose and accountability diffused

BATTLEGROUND TAMIL NADU

From former CMs C N Annadurai, MGR, to J Jayalalithaa, and now Vijay, Tamil cinema has long served as a pathway to political power. Films shape public imagination, amplify social messaging and build mass followings that translate into votes. Yet, despite this influence, the industry rarely finds meaningful space in electoral manifestos, noted insiders.

Vijay, who is seeking to carve out a base of his own, has not spoken about cinema in his manifesto. Film stars riding on popularity have done little beyond broad welfare gestures — such as film institutes or housing schemes for workers — in their home ground. Core issues such as piracy, which have been draining the industry for years, have never been addressed. Actors are invited to endorse campaigns and public causes, but when a crisis strikes, industry struggles to speak in one voice.

The leak of Vijay's 'Jana Nayagan' on April 10, ahead of Tamil Nadu polls, has exposed a compromised supply chain spanning post-production units, distributors, and digital handlers, where access is loose and accountability diffused. When a film of this scale escapes before certification, the problem is structural. The breach has raised concerns about content security within certification pipeline, as such copies are restricted to controlled channels. Weeks later, the source remains unidentified, fuelling speculation across the industry.

Adding to the complexity is the perceived influence of Vijay, whose evolving political role has led some to question whether his involvement has indirectly shaped the response — or lack thereof — to the development. What should have been a straightforward investigation has instead become a sensitive and widely avoided topic, leaving the issue open to interpretation and debate. "Unfortunately, we are an unorganised sector. We need tighter control. The editor should be the sole custodian of the movie," said producer G Dhananjheyan.

Referring to the lapse, he said, "The edit suite was made vulnerable… allowing access to an unused facility compromised valuable content." Dhananjheyan added that files are shared via Google Drive, WeTransfer, and pen drives, which are not secure.

BJP delegation meets EC, seeks stern action against Kharge

▶ Continued from page 1

EC highlighted the MCC provision requiring parties and candidates to avoid criticism of other parties and their leaders/workers based on unverified allegations or distortion. It added that Kharge's remark also went against EC's March 1, 2024 advisory to parties and their candidates, particularly star campaigners, to observe utmost restraint and decency in election campaign and engage in "issue-based debate".

A BJP delegation comprising Union ministers Nirmala Sitharaman, Arjun Ram Meghwal and Kiren Rijiju which met EC on Wednesday sought stern action against Kharge "so that nobody ever dares to make a similar comment".

Sitharaman labelled Kharge's "outrageous" remark against PM as "an insult to the mandate given by the people of India". She added, "More importantly, it is an insult to the entire system where people choose their leader through elections, and once chosen, he is the leader for the entire country."

Online gaming rules lay out framework on in-app rewards

▶ Continued from page 1

AI image
CLOSE SCRUTINY

Under the online gaming promotion and regulation rules, 2026, regulatory determination of an online game is not required unless triggered by conditions such as voluntary registration, classification as e-sports, or govt notification. This effectively exempts a large segment of social and casual gaming from prior approval requirements.

However, games involving financial stakes face closer scrutiny. The rules require the authority to assess whether "payment of any fee, deposit of money or other stake is involved" and whether users participate "in expectation of winning any money or other gain," bringing such formats under tighter oversight. The authority is empowered to impose restrictions under the act.

The framework also lays out how such assessments will be conducted, including examining "the structure and operation of the revenue model" and how in-game rewards or assets are transferred, redeemed or monetised outside the game environment—extending scrutiny beyond gameplay to monetisation pathways.

Industry has broadly welcomed the clarity. Nitish Mittersain, CEO, Nazara Technologies, said that the move "to bring clarity and structure… is a very welcome step," adding that with the right framework, India can accelerate "high-quality content" creation and build globally scalable gaming IP.

User protection measures include "age verification or age-restriction mechanisms, time limits, parental controls, user reporting and grievance redressal mechanisms," aimed at mitigating financial, psychological and social risks. Platforms are expected to ensure transparency and enable informed decision-making.

OGAI will have a multi-ministry composition, chaired by an additional secretary in MeitY, with representation from home, finance, information and broadcasting, youth affairs and sports, and legal affairs. It will maintain a registry of approved games, examine complaints, issue directions on financial transactions and advertisements, and coordinate with law enforcement and financial institutions.

The authority can issue directions on "financial transactions or funds" linked to online games and call for additional information from platforms or related service providers "as may be required," reinforcing the role of banks as enforcement intermediaries. Krafton India's Vibhor Kukreti said the "clear and structured guidelines" bring needed clarity and can support innovation and responsible operations, adding that such predictability will be key to enabling sustainable growth as the sector evolves.

Move reflects tax dept's sharper focus on misuse of presumptive taxation, say experts

▶ Continued from page 1

The presumptive tax scheme allows small taxpayers to declare income at a fixed percentage of turnover, reducing compliance by removing the need for mandatory bookkeeping and audits for eligible taxpayers. Businesses must declare a minimum profit of 6% of turnover where receipts are through electronic modes and 8% where receipts are in cash. Professionals are required to declare 50% of gross receipts as income. If the declared profit is lower than the prescribed rates, the taxpayer must get the accounts audited. If profit is higher, tax must be paid accordingly.

Tax experts said the move reflects the tax department's sharper focus on taxpayers allegedly misusing the presumptive tax mechanism by declaring lower-than-actual profits to reduce tax liability.

"The I-T department is now more watchful and alert and aims to catch any tax avoidance through mischievous use of the provisions of this scheme," said tax expert Mukesh Patel. This is the first time the department has directly sought investment-related details up to March 31, 2026, in the presumptive tax return. "The investment declaration is expected to enable tax authorities to compare declared income with investment patterns and identify cases where spending or asset creation appears disproportionate to reported earnings," the expert added.

उच्च शिक्षा निदेशालय, उत्तराखण्ड
नवाड़खेड़ा गौलापार, हल्द्वानी (नैनीताल) पिन-263126
9997686960 E-Mail-highereducation.director@gmail.com

ई-निविदा
दिनांक 22.04.2026

उच्च शिक्षा विभागान्तर्गत मुख्यमंत्री युवा भविष्य निर्माण योजना संचालित किये जाने हेतु राज्याधीन विश्वविद्यालयों एवं शासकीय तथा अनुदानित महाविद्यालयों में उच्च शिक्षा ग्रहण कर रहे छात्रों हेतु बैंकिंग सर्विसेज, एस0एस0सी0, रेलवे सर्विसेज एवं समकक्षीय परीक्षा की प्रतियोगी परीक्षा की कोचिंग हेतु देश के विभिन्न प्रतिष्ठित उच्च शिक्षण संस्थानों से ई-निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। इससे सम्बन्धित सभी सूचनायें http//www.uktenders.gov.in पर उपलब्ध है। आमंत्रण ई-निविदा का विवरण निम्नवत् है:-

क्र0 सं0	विवरण	दिनांक
1	पोर्टल में निविदा उपलब्ध होने की तिथि	24 अप्रैल, 2026
2	निविदा हेतु प्री बिड सम्मेलन	08 मई, 2026
3	प्री बिड में उठाए गए बिन्दुओं पर स्पष्टीकरण	11 मई, 2026 पूर्वान्ह 11:00 बजे
4	निविदा जमा (Online) करने की अन्तिम तिथि	20 मई, 2026 सांय 5:00 बजे तक
5	निविदा प्रपत्र की उपलब्धता	http//www.uktenders.gov.in
6	निविदा की तकनीकी प्रस्ताव खोले जाने की तिथि व समय	21 मई, 2026 पूर्वान्ह 11:30 बजे
7	निविदा के वित्तीय प्रस्ताव खोले जाने की सम्भावित तिथि	25 मई, 2026 पूर्वान्ह 11:30 बजे

निदेशक, उच्च शिक्षा,
उत्तराखण्ड हल्द्वानी।

उच्च शिक्षा निदेशालय, उत्तराखण्ड
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9997686960 E-Mail-highereducation.director@gmail.com

ई-निविदा
दिनांक 22.04.2026

उच्च शिक्षा विभागान्तर्गत मुख्यमंत्री युवा भविष्य निर्माण योजना संचालित किये जाने हेतु राज्याधीन विश्वविद्यालयों एवं शासकीय तथा अनुदानित महाविद्यालयों में उच्च शिक्षा ग्रहण कर रहे छात्रों हेतु M.B.A. परीक्षा की प्रतियोगी परीक्षा की कोचिंग हेतु देश के विभिन्न प्रतिष्ठित उच्च शिक्षण संस्थानों से ई-निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। इससे सम्बन्धित सभी सूचनायें http//www.uktenders.gov.in पर उपलब्ध है। आमंत्रण ई-निविदा का विवरण निम्नवत् है:-

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1	पोर्टल में निविदा उपलब्ध होने की तिथि	24 अप्रैल, 2026
2	निविदा हेतु प्री बिड सम्मेलन	09 मई, 2026 अपरान्ह 3:00 बजे
3	प्री बिड में उठाए गए बिन्दुओं पर स्पष्टीकरण	12 मई, 2026 पूर्वान्ह 11:00 बजे
4	निविदा जमा (Online) करने की अन्तिम तिथि	22 मई, 2026 सांय 5:00 बजे तक
5	निविदा प्रपत्र की उपलब्धता	http//www.uktenders.gov.in
6	निविदा की तकनीकी प्रस्ताव खोले जाने की तिथि व समय	23 मई, 2026 पूर्वान्ह 11:30 बजे
7	निविदा के वित्तीय प्रस्ताव खोले जाने की सम्भावित तिथि	26 मई, 2026 पूर्वान्ह 11:30 बजे

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उत्तराखण्ड हल्द्वानी।

Appeals say NIA has no evidence against accused

▶ Continued from page 1

Nineteen years later, the special trial court in Mumbai framed 19 charges against the four accused, including terror offences under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). Framing of charge is the last pre-trial step. On being informed of the charge, all four pleaded 'not guilty' before the trial court and then quickly appealed against the charge-framing order before the HC, which in Jan 2026 stayed the trial.

The NIA took over the probe in 2011 in the case from the CBI, which in 2007 was brought in to take over the probe from the Maharashtra ATS. The case first saw nine accused, all Muslim, arrested by the ATS. In 2016, the NIA trial court dropped the case against them for want of evidence. The NIA in 2012-2013 arrested the present four accused, all Hindus – Manohar Narwaria, Rajendra Chaudhary, Dhan Singh and Lokesh Sharma – who now have no trial to face after their successful appeal, said their lawyers.

There were two appeals by two accused each, one argued by senior counsel Girish Kulkarni and one by advocate Kaushik Mhatre. The appeals said NIA as a prosecuting agency has no evidence against them and hence the trial court was not obliged to frame a charge to begin with.

The appeal said they were arrested primarily on the confession of Swami Aseemanand, an accused in another blasts case, and since the confession was later rejected by a trial court in Hyderabad and Ajmer as being "coerced" and hence "inadmissible," the basis to rope them in ends. Kulkarni also argued that NIA had only three circumstances against them.

Revenue Department
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER
DHARWAD-580 001, Phone: 0836-2233840, 2233880, Fax: 0836-2747102
E-mail: deo.dharwad@gmail.com

No: SPLOCA/ADM/CLM/12/2025-26 Date 21-04-2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

(HARSHA ENTERTAINMENT PVT LTD) Public Notice under Section 7(2) of the Karnataka Protection of Interest of Depositors In Financial Establishments Act, 2004 (KPIDFE) calling for submission of claims from the Secured creditors and depositors (HARSHA ENTERTAINMENT PVT LTD), Claim forms will be issued at the office of the OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, DHARWAD to the depositor/authorized representative/nominee and in the absence of the nominee, the power of attorney holder on production of identity proof and proof of investment such as original copies of Bonds, official letter and PoA documents.

Starting date of issuing claim applications	27-04-2026	10-00 AM
Last date for submission of claim applications	26-05-2026	05-30 PM

For further details and list of documents to be submitted kindly visit https://sploca.org/

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Additional Deputy Commissioner & Competent Authority
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DIPR/CP/302/Zen/2026-27

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नवाड़खेड़ा गौलापार, हल्द्वानी (नैनीताल) पिन-263126
9997686960 E-Mail-highereducation.director@gmail.com

ई-निविदा
दिनांक 22.04.2026

उच्च शिक्षा विभागान्तर्गत मुख्यमंत्री युवा भविष्य निर्माण योजना संचालित किये जाने हेतु राज्याधीन विश्वविद्यालयों एवं शासकीय तथा अनुदानित महाविद्यालयों में उच्च शिक्षा ग्रहण कर रहे छात्रों हेतु NET, GATE, & CSIR परीक्षा की प्रतियोगी परीक्षा की कोचिंग हेतु देश के विभिन्न प्रतिष्ठित उच्च शिक्षण संस्थानों से ई-निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। इससे सम्बन्धित सभी सूचनायें http//www.uktenders.gov.in पर उपलब्ध है। आमंत्रण ई-निविदा का विवरण निम्नवत् है:-

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निदेशक, उच्च शिक्षा,
उत्तराखण्ड हल्द्वानी।

Amit Shah: Terrorism is the greatest enemy of humanity; stand united to defeat it

▶ Continued from page 1

Terrorism is the greatest enemy of humanity against which we must stand united to fight and defeat. India will continue its zero-tolerance policy against terrorism and those who harbour it," **Amit Shah** said. J&K CM Omar Abdullah said on X, "One year on, we remain united against terror & against violence. We remain resolute in our desire to rid J&K of suffering & innocent deaths. We remain committed to doing everything to ensure it never happens again. We also remain in eternal solidarity with the families who lost their loved ones a year ago in that cowardly attack. May the souls of the victims of the terror attack rest in peace."

The Army issued a warning to perpetrators of terrorism, asserting that when the "boundaries of humanity are crossed, the response is decisive". In a post on X, it said, "For acts against India, the response is assured. Justice will be served. Always... India Stands United." US ambassador to India Sergio Gor said in a post on X, "On the one-year anniversary of the horrific attack in Pahalgam, we remember the innocent victims and honour their memory as we mourn with their families. The United States stands with the people of India in their fight against terrorism."

Israeli foreign minister Gideon Sa'ar said, "On behalf of the state of Israel, on one year of the Pahalgam terror attack, we honour the memory of the innocent lives lost and stand with their families in grief," he said on X. "Together with India, we will continue to strengthen our cooperation to confront this threat with determination and to advance peace, security, and stability," the minister added. The French embassy said that France, together with European Union and its other member states, remembered the victims and reiterated their solidarity with India.

For airman's kin, tears have become resolve

Demand Deadline To Crush Terror

Kangkan.Kalita1
@timesofindia.com

A bronze statue of Tage Hailyang is unveiled in Ziro Valley on Wednesday

Guwahati: One brother wants a deadline to end Pakistan-backed terrorism. Another readies his gun to finish it. In Tajang, tucked in Arunachal Pradesh's Lower Subansiri district, the memory of IAF corporal Tage Hailyang no longer draws tears alone. A year after bloodshed in Pahalgam, grief in this village has hardened into resolve.

Hailyang, who was killed during the April 22 attack while on a short trip with wife Charo Kamhua, is now immortalised in bronze. A six-foot statue stands in Ziro Valley, unveiled on the first anniversary of his death.

Pahalgam ONE YEAR LATER

Villagers, soldiers, officials gathered on Wednesday.

"He was adorable, kind-hearted, liked by all. The loss is irreparable," says elder brother Tage Laliang. "Now we only hope for terrorism to be finished."

Another brother, Tage Mali, is a soldier in Siachen. His message home is blunt: he will turn his gun on such killers. Laliang's message back is sharper — write their names on bullets.

The family wants more than remembrance. It wants a deadline. "Like timelines set to end Naxalism, fix one for this," Laliang says, urging action against the attackers who fled. He acknowledges govt efforts, including the killing of one attacker in a 2025 operation, but says justice remains incomplete.

Tajang, a village of about 1,000 from the Apatani tribe, has shifted from mourning to mobilisation. A memorial park on family land aims to inspire youth to join the armed forces and carry forward what villagers call Hailyang's unfinished duty.

Seventh among eleven siblings, Hailyang had been a key financial support to the family. He had served five years in Srinagar, transferred to Dibrugarh, and was days away from reporting there when he took that trip.

Years earlier, as a student in Itanagar, he had quietly applied to IAF after spotting an advertisement.

State govt has given Rs 50 lakh and promised a job for a family member. "No compensation replaces a life," says local MLA Hage Appa. "This is relief, not closure."

Closure, for Tajang, lies elsewhere. In a bronze figure facing mountains. In a brother posted on ice fields. In a village that has stopped weeping and started waiting — not for memory to fade, but for a war on terrorism to end.

Rajnath: India may play greater role in settling conflicts

Surendra.Singh
@timesofindia.com

Defence minister **Rajnath Singh** said in Berlin on Wednesday that India has consistently maintained a balanced diplomatic approach under PM Narendra Modi, while leaving open the possibility of a greater Indian role in resolving global conflict, including the West Asia crisis.

Paying homage to the victims on the first anniversary of the Pahalgam attack at an Indian community event at the embassy, Rajnath also delivered a sharp rebuke to Pakistan, saying, "(Our) neighbours are more or less fine; there's just one problem, which you all know about. But if any neighbour now tries to mess around, then dot-dot-dot."

Rajnath held bilateral talks with federal minister of defence Boris Pistorius to further boost the strategic defence partnership with the European nation. The two sides discussed a range of bilateral security and defence issues, including priority areas for co-development and co-production of defence equipment, especially in niche technologies.

Rajnath highlighted the country's efforts to resolve conflicts. "India has tried... But everything has its time. It is possible that tomorrow, the time may come when India plays its role and achieves success as well."

News of payment by Indian ship to Iran fake: Govt

New Delhi: The shipping ministry on Wednesday dismissed online reports alleging that the captain of Indian-flagged ship, Sanmar Herald, paid cash or cryptocurrency to Iran to secure safe passage through Strait of Hormuz, calling it "fake news". In an official statement, Sanmar Shipping Ltd called the reports "completely false". Sanmar Herald was one of two Indian vessels that had to turn back from the Strait of Hormuz after Iranian forces fired upon them on April 18. "We spoke with the owner of the vessel and he confirmed that it is fake news... None of our ships made any payment, till date," said Mukesh Mangal, additional secretary in the shipping ministry. TNN

INDIA DIGEST

HC upholds detention of cow slaughter accused under NSA

Slaughtering of a cow evokes strong emotions and even violent reactions as it hurts the religious sentiments of a large section of society, the Allahabad high court observed, upholding the detention of a person under the National Security Act (NSA) for the offence. A division bench comprising Justices J J Munir and Sanjiv Kumar dismissed a petition filed by Sameer, who was accused of slaughtering a cow and two calves in UP's Shamli district on Holi last year. Sameer had challenged the detention order issued on May 15, 2025 by the district magistrate, which was confirmed by state govt.

Laundering: ED raids 13 sites in 3 states
The Enforcement Directorate (ED) conducted searches at 13 locations across Maharashtra, Delhi and Andhra Pradesh in a money laundering case against Rajeshwar Exports, alleging that it was involved in illegal foreign remittances. The ED searched premises linked to suspected beneficiaries, key operators, bullion traders and cooperative credit societies allegedly involved in routing funds that were ultimately siphoned abroad. ED said that around Rs 200 crore was routed in this manner through such co-operative societies. ED registered a money laundering case based on an FIR filed at N M Joshi Marg Police Station against Ritesh Amritlal Jain and others.

IAF tests emergency airstrip on eway
The IAF Wednesday conducted landing and take-off drills on the Purvanchal Expressway in UP's Sultanpur district as part of activating an emergency landing facility (ELF) during day and or at night. The drills featured a wide range of IAF platforms, including frontline fighter aircraft like Sukhoi Su-30 MKI, Mirage-2000, and Jaguar. Transport aircraft C-295 and AN-32 also carried out operations, along with Mi-17 V5 helicopters. The IAF's elite Garud Commando force participated in the exercise, demonstrating rapid deployment and security capabilities from a highway-based airstrip.

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tender & notices

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given to the public at large that, we the undersigned are investigating the title of the Schedule property more fully described hereunder, situated at Abbachikkanahally Village, Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.

As per the records furnished to us, the property is belonging to Smt. Komala Satishchandra W/o Late H. Satishchandra, Sri. Mayur Satishchandra S/o Late H. Satishchandra and Sri. Vishwas Satishchandra S/o Late H. Satishchandra. Our client is intending to enter into transaction with Smt. Komala Satishchandra W/o Late H. Satishchandra, Sri. Mayur Satishchandra S/o Late H. Satishchandra and Sri. Vishwas Satishchandra S/o Late H. Satishchandra in respect of the property.

ALL PERSONS including individuals, Hindu undivided family, companies, financial institution(s), non-banking financial institution(s), firms, association of persons, whether incorporated or not, lenders and/or creditors having any benefits, objection, demand, claim, right, title and/or interest in respect of Land or any part or portion thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage, pledge, charge, gift, trust, succession, family arrangement/ settlement, bequest, possession, lease, tenancy, maintenance, easement, memorandum of understanding, license, share, assignment, lien, attachment, development rights, partnership, right of way, lis pendens, decree or order of any judicial/quasi judicial authority, reservation, contracts/agreement, power of attorney, option, FSI consumption, right of first refusal, pre-emption or any liability or commitment or otherwise of any nature whatsoever are hereby requested to inform the same in writing, supported with the documents, to the undersigned at the address mentioned below within a period of 15 (Fifteen) days from the date of the publication of this notice, failing which, the claim or right, if any, of such person or persons shall be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

Dated this 23rd day of April 2026.

SCHEDULE PROPERTIES

Item No.1

All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing Sy. No. 30/1 old Sy. No. 3 measuring 2 Acres out of the total extent of 5 Acres situated at Abbachikkanahally Village, Kasaba hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District and bounded as follows: –

East by : Remaining portion of land in Sy. No. 30/1 old Sy. No. 3. **West by :** Property belonging to the Smt. Munihanumakka alias Shantha. **North by :** Road and Cart track. **South by :** Canal and boundary of Laigondanahalli.

Item No. 2

All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing Sy.No. 31 measuring 8A-39G converted for residential purpose vide official memorandum dated: 28.12.2004 bearing No. ALN(Dev)SR. 161/2004-05 situtated at Abbachikkanahally village, Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District and bounded as follows: –

East by: Sy. No. 30, **West by:** NH.7, **North by:** Road, **South by:** Silk farm belonging to Karnataka. Government (boundary of Laigondanahalli Village).

K.R. Krishnamurthy
Partner
Lawyers Inc., #15/2,
V.S. Raju Road,
12th Block, Kumara Park West,
Bengaluru-560 020.

TENDERS

यूनियन बैंक Union Bank of India

UNION BANK OF INDIA
Procurement Department, 1st Floor, Union Bank Bhavan, 239 Vidhan Bhavan Marg, Nariman Point, Mumbai – 400 021

RFP FOR COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR OPERATION, MAINTENANCE AND SERVICING OF AIR CONDITIONERS INSTALLED AT CENTRAL OFFICE, ASSOCIATED OFFICES AND RESIDENTIAL QUARTERS IN MUMBAI / THANE.

Union Bank of India invites offers under a Two-Bid system through the GeM portal for the RFP for Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract for Operation, Maintenance and Servicing of Air Conditioners installed at the Central Office, its Associated Offices and Residential Quarters in Mumbai / Thane. The tender has been published on the GeM portal vide **GeM Bid No. GEM/2026/B/7461490 dated 22.04.2026.** Detailed information is available on the Bank's website: **www.unionbankofindia.bank.in. The last date for submission of bids through the GeM portal is 13.05.2026 up to 11.00 AM.** The Bank reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders, wholly or partly without assigning any reason whatsoever.

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personal

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Pavitra Vij, 31 years old, daughter of Manish Vij, residing at 24263, Prestige Jindal City Apartments, Tumkur Road, Bangalore - 560073, have changed my name to Pavitra Abbott and shall hereafter be known as Pavitra Abbott for all purposes.

I, MOHANA C S/o. Chandrashekar. T, Residing At No.9, 17th Cross, 16th 'A' Main, N.S.Palya, BTM 2nd Stage, Bangalore-560076, have changed my name to C MOHAN for all purpose vide affidavit dated 18.04.2026 sworn before notary Onkarappa, Bangalore.

I Akhtar Bagum W/O, Ameer Jan R/o 938,12th Cross,1st Stage, 3rd Block, hbr Layout, kalyan Nagar Post, bengaluru, a Vide Affidavit Dated 22/04/2026 Sworn Before Notary Manjunatha Reddy Chintamani have changed my name to Akhtar Begum.

I, Shanmukha Siva Mythreya Godavarthy S/O Surya Mohan Godavarthy born on 22-03-2008 residing at Flat 110, SMR Vinay Endeavour, Hoodi, Bangalore-560048, have changed my name to Shanmukha Siva Maithreya Godavarthy vide affidavit dated 21-04-2016 at Bangalore

I Vijay Vashumal Talreja S/o Vashumal J Talreja R/o 5 4th Cross Sripuram KP West Blore 560020 have changed my name to Vijaykumar V Talreja vide affidavit dtd 21/04/2026 sworn before Notary B.R.Shashikala Blore

I, Saleem Khan Khaleel Khan (old name). S/o Khaleel Khan Razak, R/o #20, 3rd Main Road, Opp. Maruthi Layout, BTM 1st Stage, Bangalore – 560029, hereby declare that I have changed my name to Saleem Khan Khaleel.

I, B.E.Madhuri W/o Jayatheertha.K R/o 12/2, 6th Cross, Binny Layout, 2nd Stage, Vijayanagar, Bangalore-560040, have changed my name to MADHURI.B.E for all purposes.

I, Pranav Bijwe S/O Sanjay Ramkrishna Bijwe R/O 2021, Tower 2, Prestige MSR, Mathikere, Bengaluru-54, Have Changed My Name To Pranav Sanjay Bijwe For All Purposes.

I, JAYA GAUTAM, W/o Mr. Ranjit Narayan, R/o 16/17, Bangaluru Main Road, Nachathra Palace, STS BSF Yelahanka,Bangalore 560063, have changed my name to JAYA SINGH for all purposes vide affidavit dtd 21.04.2026, sworn before Notary GKRavichandra, Bangalore.

I, Sajeet Kumar Rai resident of Flat No B-223, second Floor, Vijaya Aquagreen apartment, Chickabanawara, Bangalore-560090 have changed my son's name from AGRIM RAI to AGRIM KUMAR RAI vide Affidavit dated 21.04.2026 sworn before notary Chandrakala, Bangalore.

I, Preetam S/o Babu Nayak, R/o: 5-5-377/73/c, Mailarlingeshwar Nilaya, Near Shahra Garden, Shahra Colony, Yadgir - 585202. Have Changed my Name from Preetam to Preetam Nayak.

I Madanlal Ramchand S/O, Ramchand R/o No. 16, Chodappa Road, St. Michael Church, Shantinagar, Wilson Garden, Bangalore- 560027 have changed my name to Madanlal R Kukreja.

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EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) FOR RENTING OUT OF OFFICE SPACE / WAREHOUSES

Ref No.: STC/CO/AUD/PTenants/00087/2026 Date: 17.04.2026

STC Solicits Expression of Interest (EOI) from Central / State Government Offices and their PSUs / PSEs; Autonomous Bodies / Boards / Councils / Commissions / Statutory Bodies / Regulatory Bodies, etc. running with the budgetary support of Government or controlled by the Government or set-up by a Government Act/Executive Order; Constitutional Bodies, Judicial & Quasi- Judicial Bodies and organizations set up by an act of parliament; Govt. owned Public Sector Banks; and International Bodies like UNO, WHO, UNESCO, UNAIDS, USDA, etc. for leasing out on rent the office & godown spaces at STC's premises at the following locations :-

(I) Jawahar Byapar Bhawan, Tolstoy Marg, Janpath, New Delhi, (II) STC Trade Centre, A-29, Thiru Vi Ka Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai, (III) A - Block, 3rd Floor, Chetak Complex, MP Nagar, Zone II, Bhopal- Madhya Pradesh, (IV) Warehouses and open area at A-6, Sports & Surgical Goods Complex, Kapurthala Road, Jalandhar, Punjab & (V) 3 Nos. Warehouse Sheds and Open Storage Space at D.No. 40-1-65, Beach Road, Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh.

For EOI details kindly visit **www.stclimited.co.in** and **www.eprocure.in.** The last date for online submission of EOI under two bid system is **12.05.2026.** Any further change relating to EOI shall be notified on the stated websites, which the interested parties may regularly visit.

Chief Manager (Assets Utilization Division)
Tele No. 011- 23462025 Mobile No. 99911 35625
E.Mail : drjagdishpd@stclimited.co.in

GET NOTICED

9164 056 000

SOUTH SPECIAL

BELL SCALES PVT. LTD.
BELL ESTD: 1980
An ISO 9001 : 2015 CERTIFIED COMPANY
bellscales@gmail.com bellscales.com
WEIGHING EQUIPEMENT IN A WIDE RANGE
Analytical/Jewellery Scale
LOTUS Table Top Scale
LOTUS High Low Setting
BOSS 3 Window Weighing/ Counting
BOSS Table Top Scale
Crane Scale with Wireless Printer option available
Platform Scale Weighing/ Counting
Thermal Printer Scale
Heavy Duty Platform Scale Pallet Model
Heavy Duty Platform Scale
B- 190, 5th Main, 2nd Stage, Peenya Indl. Estate, Bangalore- 560 058
Ph: 080-28360504, 28366468, 28362315 Mob: 8296873933, 8296873932, 9845356868

BORDER SECURITY FORCE
ATTENTION: ALL PENSIONERS OF BORDER SECURITY FORCE
BSF PENSION ADALAT

STC BSF Chakur is organizing Pension Adalat to redress the grievances related to pension for pensioners residing in state of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Goa states.

Date & time : 29th April from 1000 hrs to 1700 hrs
Venue : Subsidiary Training Centre, Chakur, Distt – Latur, Maharashtra, PIN – 413 513

2. Above Pension Adalat will be held through hybrid mode (Video Conference as well as Physical Mode). BSF Pensioners/family pensioners in above mentioned States may either physically come to Subsidiary Training Centre, Chakur, Distt – Latur, Maharashtra, PIN – 413 513 or may join through video conference. Pensioners / family pensioners may report to their nearest BSF HQrs, who will facilitate connection with Pension Adalat members through video conference system. BSF pensioners/family pensioners desirous of redressing their grievances related to their pension may provide their email ID, contact number and address to e-mail ID **stcckr@bsf.nic.in**. For any queries, they may contact STC BSF Chakur help desk No. 02381-299265 (extn No. 330). For further details please visit our website **www.bsf.nic.in**.

3. No TA/DA is admissible to retirees/family pensioners who will attend the Pension Adalat.

CBC 19110/11/0004/2627

CAUVERY NEERAVARI NIGAMA NIYAMITHA (GOVT OF KARNATAKA)
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, NO 06 HEMAVATHY LEFT BANK CANAL DIVISION CNNL, PANDAVAPURA MANDYA DIST

SHORT TERM E-TENDER NOTIFICATION NO: 01/ 2026-27/DATE:16.04.2026, INDENT2130/CALL-4 (TWO COVER SYSTEM)

On Behalf of Managing Director, Cauvery Neeravari Nigam Limited, as per Karnataka Transperency in Public Procurement Act the undersigned invites tender in Cover System through eprocurement portal from eligible contractors registered in PWD (Class 1) for total of 1 work Those interested in participating in the tender shall submit the tenders.on KPP Portal from 16.04.2026 Onwards For more information on E.M.D, Tender processing fee and etc visit KPPP website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in or can be obtained from the above office during office hours on working days.

Sd/-Executive Engineer. No.06 HLBC Pandavapura CNNL

ಪಾಕಸಂಗ/ಟಿಸಿ-ಮಂ/ಕೆಬಿಎಂಎಸಿ/046/2026-27

KARNATAKA ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION

No. 16 C-1, Millers Tank Bed Area, Vasanthanagara, Bengaluru-560052. Phone: 080-22268677/78/79 Fax: 080-22268667
Email: kerc-ka@nic.in Website: https://kerc.karnataka.gov.in

No: KERC/SC(F)/Wind Tariff/2025/1894 Date: 21.04.2026

NOTICE

Sub: Discussion Paper on "The Determination of Generic Ceiling Tariff for Wind Power Projects for the purpose of Bidding for the Period FY 2026-27 to FY 2028-29" - Public hearing - reg.

The Commission has issued a Discussion Paper on **"The Determination of Generic Ceiling Tariff for Wind Power Projects for the purpose of Bidding for the Period FY 2026-27 to FY 2028-29"** inviting comments / objections / suggestions.

The Commission has decided to hold a Public Hearing on the matter on **28.04.2026 at 3:00 pm** in the Commission's Court Hall. Interested persons / stakeholders may participate in the above hearing and submit their views. The Discussion Paper is made available on the Commission's website: **https://kerc.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Secretary
DIPR/CP/YC/303/2026-27 For Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission

"District Urban Devlopment Cell -583101"
Gmail: ka.ballari.dudc@gmail.com

No:DUDCBallari/Tech/DMF/E-Auction/Tender/2026-27
Date:16.04.2026

-:E-Auction notification:-

Notice is hereby given that the District Mineral Fund (2025-26) endowment amount will be put up for fixed deposit in Public Sector/RRB Banks as per applicable rules. E-Auction (DMA/2026-27/AUCTION6415) is invited through KPP Portal. Interested Public Sector/RRB Banks are requested to participate.Documents are available on (https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/) from 16.04.2026 to 05.05.2026, 5:30 PM.Schedule of Events are as below:
Events/Schedule: 1.E- Auction Published Date : **16.04.2026 11.30 AM.** 2.Date of uploading bid Documents in e-portal: **16.04.2026 11.30 AM.** 3.Pre auction Meeting @ DMFT Cell, New DC Office Bly: **27-04-2026 11.30 AM.** 4.Last Date And Time For Submit the Query: **24-04-2026 11.30 AM.** 5.Last date to upload the Declaration in Schedule A & B along with adhering documents as requested.: **05-05-2026 5.30 PM.** 6.Evaluation of documents: **07.05.2026 @ 10:00 AM.** 7.E-Auction Start & End Date: **08-05-2026 @ 10:00 AM TO 08-05-2026 03.00 PM.** 8.Probable date of Investment confirmation to selected bank: **2nd Week of May-2026**

For further details and information regarding E-Auction, please contact the Special Officer, District Mineral Foundation Trust, Office of the Deputy commissioner, Bellary (Tel. No.: 08392-295468).

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
District Urban Development cell Ballari
DIPR/Ballari/2026-27/KSMCA/RO No/76

Goverament of Rajasthan
Local Self Government Department
(Directorate of Local Bodies, Rajasthan, Jaipur)
G-3, Rajmahal Residency, Near Civil lines, Railway Crossing, Jaipur'
Tel No.: +91 141 2222469 Fax No.: +91 141 2222403 web site : www.lsg.urban.rajasthan.gov.in

No: F55( )PA/CE/DLB/3in1/BA2025-26/2026/7374 **Date 16/04/2026**

CORRIGENDUM

Online Technical and Financial Bids in Single Stage two envelops are invited on behalf of Governor of Rajasthan by State Mission Director, SBM-2.0 (U), DLB, vide NIB no.F55( )PA/CE/DLB/BA2025-26/3in1/2026/5808 dated 27.03.2026 for the woiks "Supply, delivery, commissioning and related services of Truck Chassis Mounted 3 in 1 sewer cleaning (suction, grabbing and jetting with robot and safety accessories) as per bid document for ULBs under Budget announcement year 2025-26" The bidding schedule is being revised as follows:

Sl No.	Event	Earlier	Revised
1	Bid Document submission end Date & Time	17.04.2026 at 15:00 Hrs.	30.04 2026 at 15:00 Hrs.
2	Submission of DD/BG etc for bid security	17.04.2026 at 15:00 Hrs. Physically at DLB.	30.04 2026 at 15:00 Hrs. Physically at DLB.
3	Technical Bid Opening Date & Time	17.04.2026 at 16:00 Hrs.	30.04.2026 at 16:00 Hrs

All other terms ami conditions will remain unchanged.

Sd/-
State Mission Director, SBM
DIPR/C/7225/2026

INDIAN RAILWAY FINANCE CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Navratna CPSE under Ministry of Railways)
Future on Track
ADVERTISEMENT NO. 02/2026

INDICATIVE RECRUITMENT NOTICE

Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) is a "Navratna" CPSE under administrative control of the Ministry of Railways, Government of India.
Indian Railway Finance Corporation Limited invites applications on Immediate Absorption Basis for the posts given below:

S. No.	Post	No. of Vacancies	Maximum Age Limit as on 01.04.2026
01.	Jr. Manager (Hindi)–E0 Grade	01	45 Years
02.	Assistant Manager/Dy. Manager (IT) – E1/E2 Grade	01	45 Years
03.	Personal Private Secretary–E2 Grade	01	50 Years
04.	Dy. Manager (F)–E2 Grade	01	35 Years
05.	Manager (Business Development) –E3 Grade	01	52 Years
06.	Joint General Manager – E5 Grade	01	56 Years

NOTE: 1.) For further details of qualification, experience, age limit and other criteria please visit our website www.irfc.co.in - career section. Updates will only be available on the website of the company. **2.)** Cut-off date for receipt of application: 15th May, 2026. **3.)** Corrigendum if any, notification will be published on IRFC website only.

BENGALURU NORTH CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer, Special Division, BNCC,
Amruthalli Main Road, Byatarayanapura, Bengaluru–560092

No.: BNCC/EE/SD/TEND/03/2026-27 **Date: 22.04.2026**

TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Executive Engineer, Special Diviaion, BNCC on behalf of Advertisements Department invites bids through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal from eligible licensed / registered advertisers with BNCC / any other Bengaluru City Corporation for assignment of commercial advertisement rights in 2- Zones of BNCC in accordance with the Greater Bengaluru Area (Advertisement) Rules 2025.
All interested bidders shall submit their bids electronically through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in).

The tender schedule is as mentioned below:

Date from which bid document is ready for download through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal of Government of Karnataka (https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)	**24.04.2026 from 3:00 p.m.**
Date of Pre-bid meeting and venue	**06.05.2026 at 3:00 p.m. Office of the Addl. Commissioner (Revenue), Bengaluru North City Corporation (BNCC), Amruthalli Main Road, Byatarayanapura, Bengaluru–560092**
Last date for seeking clarification if any	**06.05.2026 at 3:00 p.m.**
Last date and time for uploading of tender in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal platform	**24.05.2026 upto 5:00 p.m.**
Date and time of opening of tenders: Technical bid & Technical Evaluation	**27.05.2026 at 3:00 p.m.**
Date and time of opening of tenders: Commercial bid of Technically qualified bidders (if possible)	**Immediately after technical evaluation.**
Contact person for queries	**Deputy Commissioner (Revenue), Mobile: 8867488804, ARO (Advt) Zone-1, Mobile: 9845208509, ARO (Advt) Zone-2, Mobile: 9663366263 Email: dcyel.bbmp@gmail.com**
Place of opening of tenders and address for communication	**Office of the Addl. Commissioner (Revenue), Bengaluru North City Corporation (BNCC), Amruthalli Main Road, Byatarayanapura, Bengaluru–560092**
EMD Amount	**Rs. 20 Lakhs (out of which Rs. 16 Lakhs as Bank Guarantee and rest Rs. 4 Lakhs paid in eProcurement Portal) for each Zone wise bid.**

Note: Completed tender shall be uploaded through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal system only in the manner described in this tender on or before the last date & time stipulated.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Special Division, Bengaluru North City Corporation

BENGALURU EAST CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Additional Commissioner (Development),
BECC, Bengaluru - 560048

No.: BECC/ADC(BECC)/PR/06/2026-27 **Date: 22.04.2026**

TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Commissioner, BECC through Advertisements Department invites bids through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal from eligible licensed / registered advertisers with BECC / any other Bengaluru City Corporation for assignment of commercial advertisement rights in 2-Zones in accordance with the Greater Bengaluru Area (Advertisement) Rules 2025.
All interested bidders shall submit their bids electronically through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in).

The tender schedule is as mentioned below:

Tender Notification No.	**BECC/EE(MP&CS)/TEND/01/2026-27**
Date from which bid document is ready for download through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal of Government of Karnataka (https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)	**23.04.2026 from 3:00 p.m.**
Date of Pre-bid meeting and venue	**05.05.2026 at 3:00 p.m. Office of the Addl. Commissioner (Development), Bengaluru East City Corporation (BECC), RHB Colony, Mahadevapura, Bengaluru – 560048**
Last date for seeking clarification if any	**05.05.2026 at 3:00 p.m.**
Last date and time for uploading of tender in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal platform	**22.05.2026 upto 5:00 p.m.**
Date and time of opening of tenders: Technical bid & Technical Evaluation	**25.05.2026 at 3:00 p.m.**
Date and time of opening of tenders: Commercial bid of Technically qualified bidders (if possible)	**Immediately after technical evaluation.**
Contact person for queries	**Additional Commissioner (Development), Mobile: 9945484497 ; Email: acdbecc@gmail.com**
Place of opening of tenders and address for communication	**Office of the Addl. Commissioner (Development), Bengaluru East City Corporation (BECC), RHB Colony, Mahadevapura, Bengaluru – 560048**
EMD Amount	**Rs. 20 Lakhs (out of which Rs. 16 Lakhs as Bank Guarantee and rest Rs. 4 Lakhs paid in eProcurement Portal) for each Zone wise bid.**

Note: Completed tender shall be uploaded through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal system only in the manner described in this tender on or before the last date & time stipulated.

Sd/- Addl. Commissioner (Development) Bengaluru East City Corporation

BENGALURU CENTRAL CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Joint Commissioner, BCCC, Bengaluru–560001

No.: BCCC/TEND/14/2026-27 **Date: 22.04.2026**

TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Commissioner, BCCC through Advertisements Department invites bids through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal from eligible licensed / registered advertisers with BCCC / any other Bengaluru City Corporation for assignment of commercial advertisement rights in 2-Zones in accordance with the Greater Bengaluru Area (Advertisement) Rules 2025.
All interested bidders shall submit their bids electronically through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in).

The tender schedule is as mentioned below:

Date from which bid document is ready for download through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal of Government of Karnataka (https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)	**23.04.2026 from 3:00 p.m.**
Date of Pre-bid meeting and venue	**05.05.2026 at 3:00 p.m. Office of the Addl. Commissioner (Revenue), Bengaluru Central City Corporation (BCCC), Joint Commissioner-1 Office, Residency Road, Mayohall, Bengaluru–560001**
Last date for seeking clarification if any	**05.05.2026 at 3:00 p.m.**
Last date and time for uploading of tender in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal platform	**22.05.2026 upto 5:00 p.m.**
Date and time of opening of tenders: Technical bid & Technical Evaluation	**25.05.2026 at 3:00 p.m.**
Date and time of opening of tenders: Commercial bid of Technically qualified bidders (if possible)	**Immediately after technical evaluation.**
Contact person for queries	**Joint Commissioner-1 Mobile: 9480685619 Email: bcccjccvr@gmail.com**
Place of opening of tenders and address for communication	**Office of the Joint Commissioner-1, Bengaluru Central City Corporation (BCCC), Joint Commissioner-1 Office, Residency Road, Mayohall, Bengaluru–560001**
EMD Amount	**Rs. 20 Lakhs (out of which Rs. 16 Lakhs as Bank Guarantee and rest Rs. 4 Lakhs paid in eProcurement Portal) for each Zone wise bid.**

Note: Completed tender shall be uploaded through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal system only in the manner described in this tender on or before the last date & time stipulated.

Sd/- Joint Commissioner-1, Bengaluru Central City Corporation

BENGALURU WEST CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Commissioner, BWCC, 16th Cross, IPP Building,
Malleshwaram, Bengaluru–560003

No.: BWCC/TEND/01/2026-27 **Date: 22.04.2026**

TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Commissioner, BWCC through Advertisements Department invites bids through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal from eligible licensed / registered advertisers with BWCC / any other Bengaluru City Corporation for assignment of commercial advertisement rights in 2-Zones in accordance with the Greater Bengaluru Area (Advertisement) Rules 2025.
All interested bidders shall submit their bids electronically through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in).

The tender schedule is as mentioned below:

Date from which bid document is ready for download through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal of Government of Karnataka (https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)	**23.04.2026 from 3:00 p.m.**
Date of Pre-bid meeting and venue	**05.05.2026 at 3:00 p.m. Office of the Addl. Commissioner (Revenue), Bengaluru West City Corporation (BWCC), 16th Cross, IPP Building, Malleshwaram, Bengaluru – 560003**
Last date for seeking clarification if any	**05.05.2026 at 3:00 p.m.**
Last date and time for uploading of tender in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal platform	**22.05.2026 upto 5:00 p.m.**
Date and time of opening of tenders: Technical bid & Technical Evaluation	**25.05.2026 at 3:00 p.m.**
Date and time of opening of tenders: Commercial bid of Technically qualified bidders (if possible)	**Immediately after technical evaluation.**
Contact person for queries	**Additional Commissioner (Advertisements), Mobile: 9945482835 ; Email: addl.commbwcc2025@gmail.com**
Place of opening of tenders and address for communication	**Office of the Addl. Commissioner (Revenue), Bengaluru West City Corporation (BWCC), 16th Cross, IPP Building, Malleshwaram, Bengaluru – 560003**
EMD Amount	**Rs. 20 Lakhs (out of which Rs. 16 Lakhs as Bank Guarantee and rest Rs. 4 Lakhs paid in eProcurement Portal) for each Zone wise bid.**

Note: Completed tender shall be uploaded through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal system only in the manner described in this tender on or before the last date & time stipulated.

Sd/- Addl. Commissioner (Revenue) Bengaluru West City Corporation

BENGALURU SOUTH CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer, Traffic Engineering and Mobility Cell,
2nd Floor, 9th Main Road, Jayanagara 2nd Block, Bengaluru–560011

No.: EE/TE&M Cell/BSCC/TEND/01/2026-27 **Date: 22.04.2026**

TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Executive Engineer Traffic Engineering and Mobility Cell (BSCC) invites bids through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal from eligible licensed / registered advertisers with BSCC / any other Bengaluru City Corporation for assignment of commercial advertisement rights in 2-Zones in accordance with the Greater Bengaluru Area (Advertisement) Rules 2025.
All interested bidders shall submit their bids electronically through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in).

The tender schedule is as mentioned below:

Date from which bid document is ready for download through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal of Government of Karnataka (https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)	**23.04.2026 Onwards**
Date of Pre-bid meeting and venue	**05.05.2026 at 3:00 p.m. Office of the Addl. Commissioner (Advertisements), BSCC, 2nd Floor, 9th Main Road, Jayanagara 2nd Block, Bengaluru-560011**
Last date for seeking clarification if any	**05.05.2026 at 11:00 a.m.**
Last date and time for uploading of tender in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal platform	**22.05.2026 upto 5:00 p.m.**
Date and time of opening of tenders: Technical bid & Technical Evaluation	**25.05.2026 at 3:00 p.m.**
Date and time of opening of tenders: Commercial bid of Technically qualified bidders (if possible)	**Immediately after technical evaluation**
Contact person for queries	**Additional Commissioner (Advertisements), Mobile: 9480056951 Email: addl.comm.rev.bscc@gmail.com**
Place of opening of tenders and address for communication	**Office of the Executive Engineer, Traffic Engineering and Mobility Cell, 2nd Floor, 9th Main Road, Jayanagara 2nd Block, Bengaluru–560011.**
EMD Amount	**Rs. 20 Lakhs (out of which Rs. 16 Lakhs as Bank Guarantee and rest Rs. 4 Lakhs paid in eProcurement Portal) for each Zone wise bid.**

Note: Completed tender shall be uploaded through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal system only in the manner described in this tender on or before the last date & time stipulated.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Traffic Engineering and Mobility Cell, Bengaluru South City Corporation

Tumakuru City Corporation, Tumakuru

Website: www.tumakurucity.mrc.gov.in
Phone No:2278480, Fax: 2275106 e-mail : itstaff_ulb_tumkur@yahoo.com Grievance: 0816-2272200, 2271200

No:TCC/Engineer Section/Civil/CR/01/2026-27

DATED: 18.04.2026

Tender Notification

The Executive Engineer, Tumakuru City Corporation, Tumakuru invites tenders as per the KTPP act 1999-2000 through KPPP portal for Amruth-2.0 Grant and Corporation Grant tenders Eligible Contractors with PWD License certificate can Participate in the Tender. Contractors can download and submit the tenders through KPPP portal http/kppp.karnataka.gov.in Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and Tender Processing Fee shall also be paid electronically. Calendar of Events and other information are as follows:

1. Date of reciept of Tenders : 18-04-2026. 2. Last Date for Submission of Tenders : 05-05-2026 at 4.30 pm. 3. Last Date for Submission of Tenders for Amrut 2.0 works : 19-05-2026 at 4.30 pm. 4. Pre-Bid Meeting : 23-04-2026 at 11.30 am. 5. Date of Opening of Tenders (Technical Bids) : 06-05-2026 at 4.35 pm. 6. Date of Opening of Tenders for Amrut : 20-05-2026 at 4.45 pm. Postponement of calendar of events (if any) is only Through KPPP portal and will not be published in newspapers.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Tumakur City Corporation Tumakuru

DIPR/TUM/31/KSMCA/2026-27

JAIPUR CITY TRANSPORT SERVICES LIMITED

No. :- MD/JCTSL/2026-27/D - 184 Date :- 20/04/2026

Corrigendum - 03

This is with reference to JCTSL Bid no 08/2025-26 published on **http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in UBN No.JCT2526SLOB00010** and **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in Tender ID 2026_JCTS_533159_1,** Some amendments are made. Detail of amendments can be seen and may be downloaded from above mentioned websites and JCTSL Website **(http://transport.rajasthan.gov.in/jctsl)**

Raj.Samwad/C/26/1257 **Office on Special Duty**

ONGC ओएनजीसी ONGC ONGC

Expression of Interest (EOI)

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC), a Government of India "MAHARATNA" Category Enterprise, is India's premier energy enterprise with diversified interests across the energy sector.

ONGC invites Global EOI against EOI No. ONGC/GTP/EOI/2026/01 for Identification of potential partner/ vendor for execution of Engineering, Procurement & Commissioning of 1 MW Geothermal Power Generation System (Skid-Mounted ORC / Steam Turbine Based) in Ladakh, India.

The purpose of this Expression of Interest (EOI) is to solicit responses from technically competent and experienced partner(s)/ vendor(s) for deployment of a 1 MW ORC-based geothermal power plant *(details available at ONGC portal: **https://ongcindia.com**)*

A pre-submission meeting is scheduled online for 01st May 2026, and the last date for submission of EOI is 12th May 2026. Interested parties are requested to submit their responses in electronic (PDF/PPT) format to **kumar1_sunil@ongc.co.in** and/or **sanghi_sanjiv@ongc.co.in**. To participate in the pre-submission meeting or for any clarifications, kindly reach out to the above email IDs or contact numbers: **011-2675 4156, 9531107789**.

*Corrigenda, addenda, amendments, and time extensions to the EOI (if any) will be published only on the **https://www.ongcindia.com**. No separate notification shall be issued in the press. Prospective participants are advised to visit the portal regularly for updates.*

कार्यालय नगर निगम, अजमेर

पृथ्वीराज मार्ग, अजमेर (राज.), Phone No. :- 0145-2429920
E-mail :- ajmermc@gmail.com, Web site :-www.ajmermc.org

क्रमांक :- H.O./26-27/43 दिनांक :- 13/04/2026

निविदा सूचना

नगर निगम अजमेर में वित्तीय वर्ष 2026–27 में कार्यादेश की तिथि से कुल 12 माह हेतु जोन नं. 1,2,3 के अधीन आने वाले सर्किल नं. 1 से 11 तक के वार्डों में एवं मुख्य मार्गों की बीटों की सफाई के कार्य के लिए निविदा के माध्यम से दिये जाने हेतु निविदाएँ आमंत्रित की जाती है।

क्र.	जोन / मुख्य मार्ग	अनुमानित व्यय	अमानत राशि 2%	बीटों की सं.
1	जोन नं. 1	8,22,31,142/–	16,44,623/–	680
2	जोन नं. 2	7,03,80,183/–	14,07,604/–	582
3	जोन नं. 3	6,80,82,548/–	13,61,651/–	563
4	मुख्य मार्ग 1	2,69,66,977/–	5,39,340/–	223
5	मुख्य मार्ग 2	1,25,76,528/–	2,51,531/–	104
6	मुख्य मार्ग 3	2,39,43,774/–	4,78,875/–	198

निविदा शुल्क राशि	10,000/–
आर.आई.एस.एल. प्रोसेसिंग फीस	2,500/–
निविदा प्रपत्र प्रकाशन की दिनांक व समय	13.04.2026 सायः 5.00 बजे
निविदा प्रपत्र डाउनलोड करने की दिनांक व समय	13.04.2026 सायः 5.00 बजे से प्रारंभ
निविदा ऑनलाईन भरकर देने की दिनांक व समय	13.04.2026 सायः 5.00 बजे से प्रारंभ
निविदा ऑनलाईन भरकर देने की अंतिम दिनांक व समय	22.04.2026 दोपहर 12.30 बजे तक
तकनीकी निविदा खोलने की दिनांक व समय	22.04.2026 दोपहर 3.00 बजे तक
वित्तीय निविदा खोलने की दिनांक व समय	तकनीकी बिड़ के सफलतम निविदादाताओं को नेट के माध्यम से सूचित कर दिया जायेगा।
निविदा प्रपत्र डाउनलोड करने की वेबसाईट	**www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in**

शेष शर्तों की जानकारी निम्नलिखित वेबसाईट **www.ajmermc.org, www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in** पर देखी जा सकती है।

राज.संवाद/सी/26/1190 स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी नगर निगम अजमेर अधिशाषी अभियन्ता नगर निगम अजमेर

Govornment of Punjab
Punjab Energy Development Agency

E-TENDER NOTICE NO. PEDA/2026-27/05

Punjab Energy Development Agency (PEDA) invites online bids from prospective bidders regarding Rate Contract for Design, Supply, Installation & Commissioning along with 7 years comprehensive warranty & 7 years Annual Maintenance of 12 watt LED Based 3,00,000 nos. Solar Street Lighting Systems in the state of Punjab with scope of work as mentioned in DNIT.

Closing Date & Time for Submission of e-bids - 11.05.2026 upto 4.00 PM
Date & Time for Opening of Technical e-bids - 12.05.2026 at 11.00 AM

For more details, logon to - https://eproc.punjab.gov.in/ .

Note:

4. Corrigendum/ Addendum/ Corrections, if any will be published on the above mentioned website and no separate notices shall be issued.
2. PEDA reserve the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/-
DIRECTOR

DPR/Pb.:1034/12/2026-27/10724

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited

Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001.
Corporate Identity Number: U40109PB2010SGC033813
Website: www.pspcl.in (Contact No. 96461-23965)

Tender Enquiry No. 01/GCD/PTA/TS/PSPCL/2026-27 | Dated: 23.04.2026

Addl.SE Grid Construction Division PSPCL Patiala invites Open e-Tender for **"Outsourcing work of erection, testing and commissioning of New 66 KV S/S Rosahanpura with 01 No. 12.5 MVA Power TF along with transformer bay & 01 No. line Bay (under Annexure A) & 66 KV S/S Kadial with 01 No. 12.5 MVA Power T/F along with transformer bays & 01 No. line Bay (under Annexure B) complete with all indoor and outdoor equipment related works on partial turnkey mode under Grid Construction Division, Patiala"** For detailed NIT & Tender Specification please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 23.04.2026 (01:00 PM onwards).

Note: Corrigendum and amendments, if any, will be published online at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in

C 512/26, DPR/Pb.:1079/12/2026-27/10756

KARNATAKA NEERAVARI NIGAM LIMITED
(A government of Karnataka Enterprises)

Office of the Executive Engineer, Karnataka Neeravari Nigam Limited, MLBC Division No.1, Ramdurg.-591123

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (THROUGH KPPP PORTAL ONLY)

Ref:EE/ KNNL/ MLBC-1/DB/Tender /8 Tank Filling/Call-2/ 2026-27: 125 ,Dated:21/04/2026

On behalf of the Managing Director Karnataka Neeravari Nigama Limited, Bangalore, the Executive Engineer, KNNL, MLBCC, Division No.1 Ramdurg, Belagavi District in Karnataka State invites tender KW-4 Standard Bid document on LUMP SUM TURN KEY basis on KPP portal for the "(8 Tanks filling-Stage-I) on Turnkey basis" (Indent No. 3924) work from the registered Valid KPWD Class-I contractor. The intending bidders can submit bids as an individual / Joint Venture.

Approximately Amount Put To tender:Rs 39.22 Crores (Excluding GST) EMD Rs.0.392 Crores (No of Works : 01)

1. The Contractor can have access to the e-tender document, i.e. the Tender schedules, bid documents and other documents in the web site https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in on payment of transaction fee (non-refundable) from : 21/04/2026 to 30/04/2026 upto 17.00 Hours. The Pre-bid meeting will be on 24/04/2026 in the office of the Managing Director, Karnataka Neeravari Nigma Limited, 4th Floor, Coffe Board Building, Bangalore at 12.30 pm. The queries if any are to be sent by the intending bidders to the Executive Engineer on or before 27/04/2026, 17.00 Hrs. Last date of bid submission 30/04/2026 17.00 Hrs. Technical bid opening on 02/05/2026 17.30 Hrs. Financial bid opening 04/05/2026 17.00 Hrs will be done after approval of technical bid. Further information can be had from the office of the Executive Engineer, KNNL, MLBCC, Division No.1 Ramdurg, Belagavi District, State: Karnataka during office hours. Phone No: 08335- 242143 & e-mail Id: ee.knnlmlbc1rmd@gmail.com Other conditions are as published in KPP portal only. Further if any Corrigendum / Addendum or any modifications of this tender will be published in the web site of e-procurement only. Stipulated period for completion of work 18 Month (Including Monsoon).

Sd/-(P E Nagaraj)
Executive Engineer,(I/C)
KNNL, MLBCC, Division No.1 Ramdurg.

DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-138/KSMCA/2026-27

RAJASTHAN MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LTD.

(A Govt. of Rajasthan Undertaking), Gandhi Block, Swasthya Bhawan, Tilak Marg, Jaipur-302005, India,
Phone No: 0141-2228066, 2228064, Website: www.rmsc.health.rajasthan.gov.in,
CIN : U24232RJ2011SGC035067, E-mail : edpssrmsc@rajasthan.gov.in

Ref No. : F.02 (214)/RMSCL/Proc./S&S/NIB-09/2026/1005 Dated :- 17/04/2026

Notice Inviting E-Bids

E-bids for rate contract cum empanelment for supply of following items are invited from eligible bidders:-

S. No.	Item Name/Description	Ref. No.	UBN	Estimated Value in Rs.	Last Time & Last date for bid submission
1.	Surgical & Sutures Items	F.02 (214)/RMSCL/Proc./ S&S/NIB-09/2026/1005 Dated :- 17/04/2026	MSC2627GLRC00004	7.33 Cr.	29.04.2026 Up to 6.00 PM

Other particulars of the bids may be visited on the procurement portal **http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://rmsc.health.rajasthan.gov.in** and may be downloaded from there.

Raj.Samwad/C/26/1276 **Executive Director (Procurement) RMSCL**

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION CHANDIGARH

TENDER NOTICE

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Bid Submission Schedule (Online)	Opening Technical Bid (Online)
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER - SWM Division			
1.	Shed Extension at 300 TPD Wet Waste Plant Dadumajra, Chandigarh. Approx. Amount : Rs. 2,42,31,884/- Earnest Money : Rs. 4,84,640/- Time Period : 09 Months Tender Fee : Rs. 5,000/-	23.04.2026 at 9:00 A.M To 04.05.2026 at 11:00 A.M	04.05.2026 at 11:30 A.M
2.	Shed of extension of 10 TPD Segregation Plant Dadumajra, Chandigarh. Approx. Amount : Rs. 1,27,36,826/- Earnest Money : Rs. 2,54,740/- Time Period : 06 Months Tender Fee : Rs. 3,000/-	23.04.2026 at 9:00 A.M To 30.04.2026 at 11:00 A.M	30.04.2026 at 11:30 A.M
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER - Roads Division No.1			
3.	Re-Carpeting Of Various Roads Under Road Sub Division No 13 M.C Chandigarh 2026 - 2027 (V-6 Road Sector 35 D, 44 D and parking Sector 34 A and B). Capital Head "Improvement of Roads/Parking Places & Infrastructure Facilities" Est. Cost : Rs.398.61 Lacs EMD : Rs. 7,97,220/- Time Limit : 06 Months	24.04.2026 To 04.05.2026 upto 12.00 noon	04.05.2026 at 12.00 noon

Note :- 1) Tender Notice alongwith detailed terms and conditions is available/uploaded on website at www.chandigarh.gov.in or etenders.chd.nic.in

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
SWM Division, Room No. 612, 6th Floor, New Deluxe Building, MC Sector-17, Chandigarh email id : mcc.swm2020@gmail.com and Roads Division No.1, Room No.304, M.C. Chandigarh. (O) 0172-5021626

BENGALURU EAST CITY CORPORATION

Office of the Commissioner, Commercial complex, RHB Colony, Opp Pheonix Mall, Mahadevapura Bengaluru -48

No:AC(R)/PR/12/2026-27 **Dated 22-04-2026**

Invitation for Walk-in-Interview to appoint Enumerators for the National Census - 2027

With the objective of effectively completing the works of House Listing and House Census as First Part of National Census 2027 and the second phase of the Census during February 2027 within the time frame in the limits of Bengaluru East City Corporation, interested students, volunteers, men and women have been invited for Walk-in-Interview for appointment of Enumerators in order to contribute to the development of the nation by carrying out this task of national importance.

The number of enumerators to be appointed, their educational qualifications, honorarium and other details:

1. **Educational qualifications:** Must have completed Second PUC and above.
2. Must have a mobile with 4GB RAM capacity with Android 12.0 software
3. Priority will be given to residents of Mahadevapura, K R Pura Vidhana Sabha constituencies and surrounding areas under the jurisdiction of Bengaluru East City Corporation.
4. The first phase of house listing and house census work will continue till 15.05.2026, till then, should be committed to working continuously, including holidays.
5. As per the Census Guidelines of Census of India 2027, an honorarium of Rs. 9,000 will be paid for the first phase of census work up to 15.05.2026. (minimum 150-200 houses)
6. The second phase of the Census of India 2027 will be held during the month of February 2027 and an honorarium of Rs 16,000 will be paid. (150-200 houses or 750 -800 population)
7. This option is limited to the Census of India 2027 census only.
8. The selected candidates will be provided with necessary training by master trainers on how to access information on the Census mobile application and how to conduct the census to facilitate their work.
9. The number of Enumerators to be appointed is 1000.
10. The appointment is subject to the discretion of the Commissioner of the Bengaluru East City Corporation.

Date, time and place of Walk-in-Interview:
Date: 24.04.2026 (Friday), Time: At 10.00 A M
Place: New Horizon College of Engineering, Outer Ring Road, near Marathahalli, Kadubeesanahalli, Bengaluru 560103
Location : https://maps.app.goo.gl/qEUBkfYeWu7iAFaF6?g_st=ac

Sd/-
Commissioner, Bengaluru East City Corporation

11001/11/2627

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Lokaseva Bhawan, Sachivalaya Marg
Bhubaneswar-751001
Email ID: hedsec.od@od.gov.in

HE-GCNE-PLAN-0004-2024/20209/H.E., Bhubaneswar, Dated: 17.04.2026

RFP CANCELLATION NOTICE
Addendum No.III

Notice for inviting RFP for engagement of STATE PSU/ CENTRAL PSU/ DEPARTMENTAL UNDERTAKING as Project Management Consultant (PMC) for "CONSTRUCTION OF COMPLETE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR 18 NEWLY ESTABLISHED GOVERNMENT COLLEGES, One MDC under RUSA, HOSTELS FOR 11 EXISTING GOVERNMENT HEIs,. 20 HOSTELS FOR AIDED COLLEGES AND SOME OTHER PROJECTS AS AND WHEN REQUIRED", floated vide this Department RFP No. 01/2026 Date: 25.02.2026 stands cancelled with immediate effect.

Sd/-
Special Secretary to Government

OIPR-11001/11001/1/26-27/0002

7001/12/2627

ODISHA STATE CIVIL SUPPLIES CORPORATION LTD.

(A Govt. of Odisha Undertaking)
REGISTRED OFFICE: C/2, NAYAPALLI, BHUBANESWAR-751012
CIN: U51211OR1980SGC000894
Tel No: 0674-2395391, Fax No: 0674-2395291, website: www.oscsc.in

No: 97/MD/OSCSC Ltd., Date - 21/04/2026.

CORRIGENDUM

Ref: Request for Proposal (RFP) Advt. No. 6414/OSCSC Ltd., Date: 30/03/2026

With reference to the Request for Proposal published vide RFP Advt. No. 6414/OSCSC Ltd. Dated 30/03/2026 for 'Selection of Service Provider for e-Auction Platform and Related Support Services for Paddy and Rice', the last Date and time for submission of Proposal is hereby extended till 28/04/2026 at 17:00 Hours through online at **www.tendersodisha.gov.in**. Interested bidders may refer to the details of the corrigendum published in the websites **www.foododisha.in**, **www.oscsc.in** and **www.tendersodisha.gov.in**.

Sd/-
Managing Director
Odisha State Civil Supplies Corporation Limited

OIPR-7001/7002/1/26-27/0002

11001/12/2627

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Lokaseva Bhavan, Sachivalaya Marg, Bhubaneswar - 751001
Phone: 0674-2392133 | Website: https://dhe.odisha.gov.in
Mail: sec3hed@gmail.com/hedsec.od@od.gov.in

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Higher Education Department, invites sealed tenders from reputed State PSUs/Central PSUs/Departmental Undertakings for the following work:

The complete set of bidding documents and other details are available at **https://dhe.odisha.gov.in.**

Estimate PAC Rs. 380 Cr | EMD Rs. 2,00,000/-

Last date for submission of bids: **07/05/2026 up to 03:00 PM**
Opening of technical bids: **08/05/2026 at 3:30 AM**

Sr. No.	Name of the Work	Tender No.	Tender Fee
1	Construction of college buildings and hostels	GCNE:02/2026	Rs. 10,000/-

Bids must be sent via Speed Post/Courier to:

The Director Higher Education, O/O Directorate of Higher Education, Heads of Department Building, 5th Floor, Unit-V, Bhubaneswar, Khordha district, Odisha, PIN-751001.

Sd/- Special
Secretary to Govt., GCNE

OIPR-11001/11001/1/26-27/0003

25001/42/2627

ମୁଖ୍ୟ ନିର୍ମାଣ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟାଳୟ ଗ୍ରାମ୍ୟ ନିର୍ମାଣ ମଣ୍ଡଳ, ବ୍ରହ୍ମପୁର

(ଗ୍ରାମ୍ୟ / ଯୋଜ- ଆମ୍ବାପୁଆ, ଆୟକର ଭବନ ନିକଟରେ, ବ୍ରହ୍ମପୁର - ୭୬୦୦୧୧, ଗଞ୍ଜାମ, ଓଡିଶା

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BERHAMPUR

(At/Po- Ambapua, Near Income Tax Office, Berhampur-760011, Ganjam, Odisha)

(E-Mail : serwbpr2004@yahoo.com, Tel No. : 0680-2404287)

E-Mail / E-despatch

No. e-tender // 2769 // RWC// BAM // Dated. 21.04.2026

1st Corrigendum to Bid Identification No. Online Tender/64-2025-26/BPR

1) The partial modification of Bridge works under **SETU BANDHANA YOJANA for the year 2024-25** vide above identification has been made as follows.

1	Date of availability of tender	::	**14.05.2026 to 29.05.2026 upto 5.30 PM** instead of 20.04.2026 to 05.05.2026 upto 5.30 PM.
2	Last Date & Time of seeking tender clarification	::	**27.05.2026 at 5.30 PM** instead of 02.05.2026 at 5.30 PM
3	Date of opening of Technical Bid	::	**30.05.2026 at 11.00 AM** instead of 06.05.2026 at 11.00 AM
4	Date of opening of Financial Bid	::	**Will be intimated later on.**

All other contents will remain unchanged.

Sd/-
Chief Engineer
R.W.Circle, Berhampur

OIPR-25001/25071/1/26-27/0001

32001/100/2627

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

Office of the Chief Engineer & Basin Manager Baitarani Basin, Keonjhar
Email id- cebmbaitaranibasin16@gmail.com

1st Corrigendum to e-Procurement Notice No.CEBM Baitarani 01 of 26-27

BID IDENTIFICATION No.CEBBK BAID-01 / 2026-27

Name of the Work: Construction of Flood Protection embankment on Baitarani left from Ambo to Samana from RD. 1710M to 8840M in Hatadihi Block of Keonjhar District

Value of work (Excluding GST) may be read as **Rs.1538.04 lakh** instead of Rs.1625.44 lakh.

All other terms and conditions are remains unchanged.

Sd/-
Chief Engineer & Basin Manager
Baitarani Basin, Keonjhar

OIPR-32001/32495/1/26-27/0002

13001/276/2627

BRAHMAPUR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, GANJAM

INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB)

Letter No. 7246/ **Date - 18/04/26**

Invitation for Bids
NATIONAL COMPETATIVE BIDDING THROUGH E-PROCUREMENT
Bid Identification No BMC (BAM):- 325/2026-27

The Municipal Commissioner, Berhampur,, invites percentage rate bids in ONLINE MODE only, as per annexure "A"

1	Nature of work	Civil work
2	Name of Work	Construction of 2B + G + 3 stored Building of Giri market Complex cum Vending Zone at ward no. 18
3	Amount of Tender (in Rupees)	Rs. 33,04,69,526.00
4	No. of work	1(One)
5	Bid Cost.	The bidders shall remit online the cost of bid document for amount through the process as mentioned in the DTCN as per Annexure "A"
6	E.M.D	The bidder shall remit online the Earnest Money Deposit/Bid Security at the rate of 1% of the estimated cost put to tender as mentioned under DTCN. Bidders desirous to hire machineries or equipments from outside the State or owned but deployed outside the State are required to remit online 2% of the amount put to tender as Bid Security. Exemption from EMD is permissible as per codal provisions of Govt. Of Odisha. as per Annexure "A"
7	Class of Contractor	AS per the Annexure "A"
9	Availability of Bid Documents in the website	From 10:00 hrs.of 21/04/2026 to 17:00 hrs. of 15/05/2026
10	Date & Time of Opening of Technical Bids	11.30 hrs. onwards on Dt. 19/05/2026
10	Date & time of opening of financial bids	Shall be intimated to the responsive Technically qualified bidder after evolution of Technical bids.
11	Mode of submission of tender	Tender Should submitted On line in **www.tendersorissa.gov.in**
12	The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website :**https://tendersodisha.gov.in**. Any addendum / corrigendum cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website only.		

BEMC-ED-TEND-0002-2026/9/2026

Sd/-
Commissioner
Berhampur Municipal Corporation
Berhampur, Odisha,

OIPR-13001/13035/1/26-27/0003

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
No.2, 2/1 & 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road, Gandhinagar, Bengaluru - 560009. Phone No. 080-22265383 website : www.kiadb.in

No. IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-05/867/2025-26 **Date: 22.04.2026**

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER

(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Item Rate Tender under two cover bid system are invited as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors (Civil) who have got adequate financial resources & sufficient past experience for the following works as per the schedule given below:

Name of the works: 1) Construction of RCC Side Drains from Accute Bearing Factory upto Road Connecting from State Highway at Doddaballapura General Industrial Area (1st Phase), Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District (Reserved for SC). 2) Construction of RCC Side Drains from TAFE Factory upto Accute Bearing Factory at Doddaballapura General Industrial Area (1st Phase), Doddaballpura Taluk, Bengauru Rural District (Reserved for SC).

- The Last Date and Time for Receipt of Tenders: **04.05.2026** upto **4:00** pm.

Applicants May download bidding documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/-
Chief Engineer-1,
KIADB, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/306/CCL/2026-27

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
No.2, 2/1 and 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road, Gandhinagar, Bengaluru - 560009. Phone No. 080-22265383, website: www.kiadb.in

IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-06/869/2026-27 **Date: 22.04.2026**

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER

(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Item rate Tenders under two cover bid system is invited as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors who have got adequate financial resources, suitable construction equipments, technical man power & sufficient past experience for the the following works mentioned below:

Name of the Works : 1) Improvements to Industrial Layout, including strengthening of Roads, Construction of Culverts, Drains and Water Supply distribution network at Hi Tech Defence and Aerospace Park Phase-1, Devanahalli Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.

2) Improvement to Industrial Layout including reconstruction and re-surfacing of 12m wide and 18m wide roads including flexible pavement, construction of RCC side drain, RCC cross drainage and maintenance of existing drains works in Bommasandra Jigani Link Road Industrial Area, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru Urban District.

The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **11.05.2026** upto **4.00 pm.**

Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

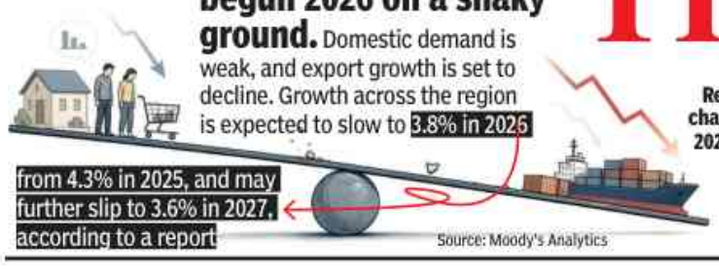
Sd/-
Chief Engineer-1, KIADB Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/305/Zen/2026-27

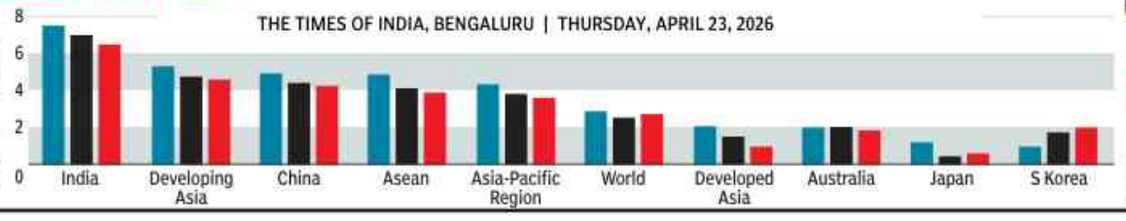
TIMES BUSINESS

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2026

Asia-Pacific eco has begun 2026 on a shaky ground. Domestic demand is weak, and export growth is set to decline. Growth across the region is expected to slow to 3.8% in 2026 from 4.3% in 2025, and may further slip to 3.6% in 2027, according to a report



Source: Moody's Analytics



Recent developments have clouded the outlook:

1 The conflict in West Asia has pushed commodity prices higher, reminiscent of the inflation and supply disruptions that followed the pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine

2 US tariff policy is still in flux despite its Supreme Court's Feb ruling that invalidated country tariffs. Investigations under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974 suggest that Washington intends to restore the tariff regime

LTTS posts 8.3% FY26 revenue growth at $1.2bn

Bengaluru: L&T Technology Services (LTTS) reported full-year revenue of $1.2 billion, up 8.3% year-on-year. For the March quarter, revenue stood at $306 million, rising 0.3% YoY. "Anticipating shifts in the business landscape and technology over the next five years, we have recalibrated our portfolio toward profitable, future-ready segments. Our continued operations (excluding divested businesses) delivered 8.3% growth to $1,233 million in FY26," said **Amit Chadha**, CEO & MD, LTTS. The company reported strong deal momentum, with FY26 large deal bookings crossing $850 million. TNN

'Fintech enters new phase led by AI, profitability'

Bengaluru: The global fintech sector is entering a new phase defined by profitability, scale and the growing influence of artificial intelligence, following years of volatility, according to a joint report by McKinsey & Company and QED Investors. The report estimates fintech revenues at around $650 billion in 2025, growing more than 20% year-on-year and significantly outpacing the broader financial services industry. Despite this, fintechs account for just 4% of total financial services revenues, highlighting significant room for expansion. At the current pace, the market could approach $2 trillion by 2030. TNN

Dunzo cofounder Biswas' startup raises ₹102 crore

Bengaluru: AI-led concierge platform M, founded by Dunzo co-founder **Kabeer Biswas**, has raised Rs 102 crore in a seed round led by Peak XV Partners, with participation from Blume Ventures and CRED, according to filings with the Registrar of Companies. The company has been co-founded with former Dunzo executive Kartik Mishra and aims to automate household management tasks. According to Biswas's LinkedIn profile, the startup focuses on simplifying everyday urban living by using AI to handle routine responsibilities. TNN

Supply side disruptions pose growth, price risks: RBI MPC

Central Bank Confident Of Country's Macro Fundamentals

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: The minutes of the April meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) reveal a panel that was deeply concerned about the downside risks to growth emanating from the West Asia conflict, even as it remained uniformly confident about the resilience of India's macro fundamentals leading to the unanimous decision to hold rates.

Governor Sanjay Malhotra set the tone by acknowledging the growing risks to the outlook, noting that "supply chain disruptions, that may take longer to subside fully and restore the logistics network, pose downside risks to growth and upside risks to inflation."

He further cautioned that "there are risks skewed to the downside from global and weather-related uncertainties" and warned that "if the conflict remains unresolved for a long duration, it can make the task of central banks arduous in their endeavour to rein in inflation expectations while minimising growth sacrifice."

Yet, even as he highlighted these vulnerabilities, he underscored the underlying strength of the economy, asserting that "the Indian economy is on a much stronger footing at the current juncture than at any time before to withstand these shocks," while maintaining that the outlook "remains cautiously positive" with "underlying inflation pressures... contained."

SETBACK TO GOLDILOCKS PHASE?

- Governor **Sanjay Malhotra** noted that supply chain disruptions, that may take longer to subside fully and restore the logistics network, pose downside risks to growth and upside risks to inflation
- External member **Saugata Bhattacharya** struck a caution-first note: risk-balance shifts materially; conflict keeps supply-chain dislocations elevated
- **Ram Singh** observed that going ahead the conflict "could likely shift the Indian growth-inflation trade-offs from a Goldilocks state...to the opposite extreme"

Deputy governor Poonam Gupta similarly flagged the emerging headwinds, observing that "growth is projected to be slightly milder at 6.9% for FY27" in a context where "global uncertainty has risen from already high levels" and the economy is dealing with an "external shock (that) is supply driven." She anchored the outlook in domestic strength: inflation may edge up to 4.6% in FY27 but stay within the tolerance band.

Growth rests on improving fundamentals of public/private capex and rising investment rates which signal new-capacity build-out. Hence, to back a supportive stance, the RBI must stay growth-enabling, meet productive needs, keep the cycle turning.

Among external members Saugata Bhattacharya struck a caution-first note: risk-balance shifts materially; conflict keeps supply-chain dislocations elevated. Oil unlikely to revert to prewar levels fueling "non-linear" macro spillovers. Inflation risks build as expectations edge up; external flank wobbles, with capital flows geo-risk exposed. Yet he flagged a counterpoint: high-frequency data show resilience with the growth engine still running. Nagesh Kumar flagged a multi-channel shock: Hormuz blockage chokes supply, sends crude "through the roof," stoking growth/inflation risks. Weak global demand hits exports; pricier oil swells import bill widening CAD.

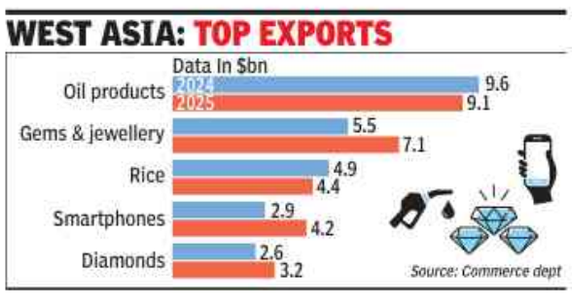
Govt plans special ships to lower cost

Sidhartha@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: The commerce department is working with agencies, including the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI), which was on the privatisation list until recently, to run special vessels to West Asia to help exporters move their goods at cheaper rates.

While freight to West Asia is in the region of $3,000-3,500 per 20-feet equivalent (TEU) and $4,500-6,000 for refrigerated units, govt is eyeing rates, which could be nearly half that level to make it viable for Indian exporters. While the Strait of Hormuz remains inaccessible, vessels may dock at other ports, and from there goods may be shipped by roads, as is already being done for certain markets.

WEST ASIA: TOP EXPORTS



DGFT has held consultations on the issue and APEDA, which is tasked with farm exports, will lead cargo aggregation efforts, including identifying and roping in exporters, who want to avail themselves of the plan.

The move indicates that agricultural products — from perishables, such as onions, bananas and other fruits and vegetables — to rice and tea will be given a major push. Some of the fruit and vegetables exporters told **TOI** that for several markets in the region, freight rates are now higher than the cost of goods, making it unviable to ship.

Based on demand estimate, for refrigerated and non-refrigerated cargo, SCI will deploy vessels, along with route and frequency. There has been also some discussion on size of the vessel, with a 4,000 TEU merchant vessel being deployed or some smaller ones of, say, 1,000 TEU being chartered, at least initially. Concor will ensure the availability of containers, something which may face a shortage in the coming weeks, and also facilitate cargo movement up to the port.

The commerce department was looking at freight subsidy to help businesses tide over the problem, but this is seen as a more viable option, which is not only targeted at specific markets, but also will not violate global trade rules on subsidy. Some of the countries in the Gulf region are also looking at options to help cover some of the freight cost, especially for food items.

'We want to be among leaders, if not the leader'

Pirojsha Godrej Maps Growth Push With Listings And Overhaul Two Years After Dynasty Split

Vipashana Kamble & Reeba Zachariah | TNN

Mumbai: Two years after one of India's most storied business dynasties, Godrej Group, split, Godrej Industries Group (GIG) is targeting 15% annual growth over five years and preparing to list more businesses as incoming chairman Pirojsha Godrej charts its next phase.

GIG, with sales of Rs 57,300 crore, also plans to expand a nascent pet care business and untangle Godrej Agrovet (GAL), which Pirojsha calls "a conglomerate on its own", spanning animal feed, dairy, poultry and frozen foods.

At GIG's headquarters in Vikhroli, where his office overlooks a vast stretch of protected mangroves, Pirojsha is clear about the filters guiding these ambitions. "We don't want to be in spaces where we are a marginal player," he said. "We want to be among the leaders, if not the leader."

That principle applies as much to exits as expansion. While acquisitions remain on the table, GIG is willing to prune, shifting capital from sub-scale or non-core bets to businesses where it sees growth potential.

Pirojsha, who started as a management trainee in 2004 and has been heading Godrej Properties (GPL), describes GIG as a "129-year-old but two-year-old group". The 46-year-old, a father of two, said: "We have the characteristics and advantages of an established group but we're also new (following the 2024 split). It is both a great opportunity and a big responsibility to script the next chapter."

He takes over as chairman from his uncle Nadir Godrej in Aug, following a separation that stood out in corporate India for the absence of public acrimony.

"It wasn't straightforward or quick. There were genuine differences, but there was always a shared commitment to resolve things amicably," Pirojsha said, measured in his response. If anything, the aftermath has been calmer. "I've been on holiday with some of my cousins from the other side," he said, with a brief laugh. "We've all grown up together." With business decisions now independent, "that potential source of disagreement has effectively been resolved."

The split created two groups. The other faction, Godrej Enterprises Group (GEG), led by Jamshyd Godrej, has revenues of Rs 19,769 crore.

That equanimity extends to the groups' most consequential shared asset—the Vikhroli real estate holdings. Despite speculation that the parcels were central to the dispute, Pirojsha said the partnership framework was left largely untouched and continues as before.

Under the arrangement, GEG—which owns the Vikhroli land—will act as developer, while GPL will serve as marketing manager, focused on sales and entitled to 10% of the project topline. The arrangement covers all Vikhroli properties, with both sides retaining equal rights to Godrej brand in the region. Outside, brand usage will follow first-mover precedence, resting solely with GPL. Both groups are also bound by a six-year non-compete.

For GIG, the next five years come with defined targets. Sales are expected to grow at least 15% annually, while earnings per share are projected to rise 20% each year. As newer businesses like financial services mature, each is expected to deliver at least 18% return on equity. If achieved—and with planned listings of the chemicals and financial services businesses—the group's market capitalisation could reach Rs 5 lakh crore, roughly three times current levels. The targets, Pirojsha said, are being made public deliberately to "hold ourselves accountable, both internally and externally."

'SPLIT WASN'T STRAIGHTFORWARD'

> The business split wasn't a straightforward or quick process. It involved considerable time, negotiation, and mutual understanding. There were genuine differences in how to move forward, but there was always a shared commitment to resolve things amicably and with transparency, avoiding public disputes or any harm to the Godrej brand. With each side now pursuing independent paths, the overlap that once caused friction has been removed, along with the potential for conflict
>
> **Pirojsha Godrej** | CHAIRPERSON DESIGNATE, GIG

Sensex falls 757pts as uncertainty clouds peace talks

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: The fragile nature of the West Asia peace talks took its toll on investor sentiment on Dalal Street on Wednesday with a reversal of sensex's three-session winning run, and the index closed 757 points lower at 78,516 points. Rising crude oil prices and the weakness of the rupee continued to weigh on sentiment, market players said.

The sensex opened on a weak note, dipped lower and after a bumpy ride through the session closed near the intraday low of 78,442 points. On NSE, Nifty too followed a similar trajectory and closed 199 points lower at 24,378 points.

According to Ajit Mishra of Religare Broking, markets witnessed a corrective session due to weak global cues and sector-specific pressure. On the sectoral front, "the tone was mixed, with a sharp sell-off in IT stocks, while auto, banking, and financials also witnessed profit booking after the recent rally."

Foreign funds continued to sell aggressively in the market with the day's net outflow at Rs 2,078 crore, BSE data showed.

NSE nears IPO as Sebi panel clears ₹1.8k cr settlement

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: The long-drawn process for the listing of NSE, the country's largest stock exchange by turnover and revenue, got a boost after a panel set up by markets regulator Sebi cleared the bourse's settlement offer in long-pending issues popularly known as co-location and dark fibre cases. These cases, more than a decade old, related to NSE allowing early access to derivatives trading data to some preferred brokers for illegal gains.

According to sources, NSE is settling the case for Rs 1,800 crore, part of which are the disgorged gains from those illegal activities. Such access was allowed under former top NSE officials including Ravi Narain and Chitra Ramakrishna. Since then, NSE has seen two MDs take charge of the bourse one after the other, with cleaning up the mess being one of their top priorities.

In Jan, Sebi chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey had said that the regulator would give its 'no objection' to NSE to file for its IPO. After NSE received the Sebi nod, it set up a panel of top officials and board members to work on its draft prospectus for its offer, estimated to be worth Rs 23,000 crore.

TechM Q4 revenue rises 4.9% YoY to $1.6 billion

Veena Mani & Shashank Didmishe | TNN

Bengaluru/Pune: Tech Mahindra reported March-quarter revenue of $1.6 billion, up 0.9% sequentially and 4.9% year-on-year. In constant currency terms, revenue rose 0.6% sequentially and 2.4% year-on-year.

For FY26, revenue stood at $6.3 billion, growing 1.9% in dollar terms and 0.6% in constant currency, as macro uncertainty, supply chain disruptions and a pullback in discretionary spending weighed on demand. "Growth this quarter was led by manufacturing, with strong performance in retail & CPG and our Comviva product business. Deal momentum remains strong across sectors, especially telecom and manufacturing, with no meaningful change in deal tenures," said CEO **Mohit Joshi** during the earnings call on Wednesday.

On AI, Joshi said the technology is increasingly enabling new deal wins and monetisation opportunities rather than acting purely as a deflationary force.

Deal momentum remained strong across sectors, particularly telecom and manufacturing, while the company continued to expand in BFSI, healthcare and retail. "Our deal pipeline remains very strong across multiple sectors," Joshi said. Growth in the quarter was led by manufacturing, with retail and CPG—especially in the Americas—posting strong double-digit gains. The company also highlighted rising traction in BFSI, particularly in payments, wealth management and insurance platforms.

HCLTech shares drop 11% as weak outlook offsets AI gains

Aabhas Sharma, Veena Mani & Shilpa Phadnis | TNN

New Delhi and Bengaluru: Shares of HCLTech fell nearly 11% on BSE on Wednesday after the company issued a softer-than-expected outlook following a muted March quarter performance.

Responding to concerns around a 2–3% annual deflation driven by AI, CEO C Vijayakumar said the company has largely offset the impact of deflation in its traditional services business, even as automation continues to compress deal sizes.

"We've already offset more than two-thirds of that deflation through new services," he said, pointing to FY27 services revenue guidance of 1.5–4.5%, with a midpoint of around 3%. In FY26, the company reported overall growth of 4.8%, with organic growth at 3.8%. March-quarter revenue declined 3.3% sequentially in constant currency but rose 2.4% year on year; in dollar terms, it stood at $3.6 billion, down 2.9% sequentially and up 5.3% year on year.

For FY26, HCLTech reported 3.9% constant currency growth and 6% dollar growth to $14.6 billion, with Vijayakumar citing tariff volatility and weak discretionary spending as key headwinds.

> We've already offset more than two-thirds of that deflation through new services...Our growth trajectory already reflects our ability to counter this pressure through new-age offerings
>
> **C Vijayakumar** | CEO & MD, HCLTECH

The company has been investing heavily in what it calls "advanced AI" services, which have reached an annualised revenue run rate of $620 million, alongside areas such as cloud, cybersecurity and data modernisation.

While a portion of HCLTech's legacy business remains exposed to AI-driven disruption, the broader strategy reflects a structural transition underway in the IT services sector. Vijayakumar pointed to continued strength in financial services and technology verticals as areas supporting near-term growth.

On the operational front, the company downplayed concerns around recent layoffs, including about 120 employees in Orlando, calling it a routine adjustment linked to a specific client ramp-down.

"We have over 20,000 employees in the US, and this was a planned change. It's not indicative of broader trends," he said. HCLTech also clarified that its current guidance does not factor in the acquisition of a telecom business unit from Hewlett Packard Enterprise, as regulatory approvals are still pending.

Even as restructuring continues across the sector, Vijayakumar said the company's approach remains targeted rather than structural.

"We also had some acquisitions, particularly in the auto segment, that didn't play out as expected, which required restructuring. This is something we evaluate case by case each year; there's no one-size-fits-all answer." While AI-native firms are increasingly seen as both competitors and collaborators, Vijayakumar emphasised the role of IT services companies in enterprise adoption.

"While we're not quantifying investments or payback periods, deploying frontier AI models at scale in enterprises requires deep contextual understanding. That's where service providers like us play a key role. We collaborate with AI companies to deliver value to clients."

Persistent stays on $2bn path despite AI disruption, macro headwinds

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Bengaluru: Despite macro uncertainty weighing on demand, Persistent Systems CEO Sandeep Kalra said the firm remains on track to achieve $2 billion revenue target, implying 3.5% quarter-on-quarter growth and 15% year-on-year growth in FY27—still ahead of the industry, though slower than Street expectations. "We prefer to stay ambitious rather than lower expectations," he said in an interaction with TOI after the earnings call on Wednesday.

Persistent aims to become a $2 billion enterprise by FY27 and scale further to $5 billion by FY31 by sharpening its focus on AI-led execution, tuck-in acquisitions and deeper engagement with global clients. Kalra also reframed the debate around AI-led deflation. "Instead of focusing only on deflation in existing work, it's important to look at new opportunities AI creates," he said, pointing to use cases in pharma where AI can significantly accelerate drug discovery timelines.

The company reported a steady but slightly softer March quarter, with revenue at $436 million, up 3.2% sequentially and 16.2% year-on-year. In constant currency terms, revenue grew 3.4%. For FY26, revenue rose 17.4% to about $1.6 billion. EBIT margin stood at 16.3%, down 40 basis points sequentially.

> Our licensing revenues are not just pass-through...They are tied to platforms and products we've built over time...and are often embedded within our services
>
> **Sandeep Kalra** | CEO, PERSISTENT SYSTEMS

A key differentiator, Kalra emphasised, is the company's platform-led approach. "Our licensing revenues are not just pass-through," he said. "They are tied to platforms and products we've built over time and are often embedded within our services."

Addressing concerns around a sequential dip in large accounts, Kalra dismissed any suggestion of demand weakness. "Our top accounts have scaled significantly, and as part of that, we've committed to cost savings," he said, noting that offshoring-led efficiencies can create short-term fluctuations. However, growth remains robust, with top clients expanding at around 20% year-on-year, reflecting broad-based momentum.

On AI-led disruption, Kalra described the shift as structural but manageable. "This is not just a cost cycle; it's a capability cycle," he said, adding that companies investing early in capabilities stand to gain disproportionate share.

Tesla widens India bet with 6-seater launch

Asmita.Dey@timesofindia.com

Mumbai: Even as it contends with slow sales and stiff competition from rivals, Elon Musk's Tesla is expanding in India with a new product launch and wider coverage of its service centres and charging stations in the country. On Wednesday, the electric vehicle (EV) giant launched its six-seater Model Y L variant in India, as it targets affluent local households looking to spend on spacious cars.

Tesla's India head Sharad Agarwal said the firm wants to "disrupt" the luxury SUV market here. The US-based company will compete with players such as Mercedes-Benz and MG in the luxury three-row EV category. EVs currently make up about 4-5% of total car sales in India. Tesla forayed into India in July 2025 with its Model Y SUVs, having delayed its entry into the market for several years over high tariffs, limited flexibility and charging infrastructure challenges. Despite launching with much fanfare, its growth in India has been sluggish—Tesla recorded 342 vehicle registrations in FY26, data from Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) showed. The firm is also understood to have offered discounts of up to Rs 2 lakh on select variants of Model Y to clear its inventory. Tesla imports the cars it sells in India, paying steep duties for them which is why they are priced way higher here compared to other markets.

> **High prices, slow sales challenge EV maker's push in India market**

"We are building block by block a very strong foundation for the business and the brand in future, focusing on building the entire ecosystem in India," Agarwal said. Deliveries for the new Model Y L, starting at Rs 61.99 lakh will begin from this quarter.

A thought for today

Data! Data! Data! I can't make bricks without clay!

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, as Sherlock Holmes

Calling For An IEnS

Pulling teachers away from teaching can't mend India's data poverty. A specialised enumeration service is needed

Actions speak louder than words. India says teachers are the essential engine of its future, who must forge a citizenry that can thrive in an AI era. But then acts like teaching is utterly nonessential. Today, they are going door-to-door, houselisting for Census 2027. EC's SIR exercise has demanded their labour. They get election duties. They have to register beneficiaries for govt health insurance schemes, conduct cattle censuses, survey drug-addiction… against the backdrop of 10L teaching vacancies in the schools funded by Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan. Even private school staff are being put on census shifts, under threat of salary cuts. Clearly, browbeating teachers is quite 'convenient' for govts. But their convenience is very costly for the rest of us.

Every day a teacher does census work, means 1) an education deficit. Since they are not robots, making them sweat in the field during their vacations and after-school hours, doesn't lessen this toll. The variety of data the country needs, means 2) these disruptions are frequent, not one-off. But 3) data quality cannot be good when the enumerators are resentful and unspecialised. So, what we have here is an ad hoc system with no real upside to it. It's past time we considered rational, efficient alternatives. US, for example, has been running a census bureau with around 4,000 full-time staff, who swell up during decennial counts. Professional enumerators improve data accuracy and consistency across census cycles. All the public data needs they serve year-round, also make them quite cost-effective.

Doesn't an Indian Enumeration Service (IEnS), ring nicely? It could have different tiers, including permanent cadre both at the centre and in state-level coordination units. And on a need basis, instead of pulling 30L teachers away from teaching, it could mobilise from a 4cr strong pool of higher education students. This would be valuable experience for young Indians. Right now, teachers are out in the sun, pounding on their personal, sometimes newly bought, smartphones, out of sorts with the houselisting app, the weather, and govt. Now, imagine motivated, tech-savvy university students doing the legwork instead. It wouldn't even need to be done in summers (when teachers are 'freer') anymore. And imagine riches of data, accurate, timely, accessible. Welfare to transport, the productivity gains would improve all our lives.

Burning Question

Why are India's factories so dangerous? Because people who can make them safer aren't bothered

Going to work shouldn't feel like going to battle, but that's the truth of India's factories. In just over a week, more than 60 workers have died in three major explosions. Such news would jolt any sensitive nation to introspect, and improve. Italy's Seveso leak in 1976 laid the foundation for entire EU's industrial safety programme. Between 2019 and 2022, industrial accidents across EU averaged 22 a year. In Korea, CEO of lithium battery maker Aricell was only yesterday sentenced to four years in prison, for a factory blast that killed 23 workers.

We have become calloused, however. Last week's Vedanta boiler blast, and firecracker factory explosions in TN and Kerala this week, shock us no more than bus fires that kill hundreds a year, and road accidents that kill 1.8L a year. We have normalised risk. When the Kerala cracker unit exploded yesterday, a shoe factory in Delhi was also ablaze. Our capital has been the scene of some of the deadliest factory accidents, such as the 2019 fire that killed 43 sleeping workers. That's the micro sector, but what do you say when a brand-new HPCL refinery, awaiting inauguration, goes up in flames?

Two things are clear. One, life's cheap in our eyes, so factories without fire exits, overloaded electrical systems, and poorly maintained boilers are all around us. Also, hazardous chemicals stored without safeguards. Remember Bhopal? Two, the vigilance system is broken. In 2020, Delhi had only one inspector for every 973 factories. The auto ancillary industry is notorious for accidents that cost workers hands and fingers, yet, data shows a sharp drop in inspections from 2012 to 2020. We can't solve a problem if we refuse to see it. In 2017, a study claimed 48,000 occupational deaths in India every year. Govt disagreed. Its own data shows an average of 1,109, but those are in registered factories, while 90% of Indian labour works in the informal sector, where work conditions are far worse. Even in the formal sector, most accidents go unreported as employers, police and hospitals aim for a "compromise". There's a reason why ILO calls India the most dangerous country for workers. It's time to do something about it.

Slogan-showgan

'Nari' once again becomes 'nara'

Bachi Karkaria

Forget 'delimitation' (a word as unwieldy as a bloated LS). Could we please unanimously agree to a limitation on male *netas* banging on about who's doing more for women, and who will pay the price on Judgment Day, aka Voting Day. For decades, we have protested against our 'joint existence', always mentioned as appendages of sons/fathers/husbands, instead of simply individuals. It's our losing battle, more so when polliticians use *us* to win *their* battles. So, please allow me to add 'football' to the standard electoral roll-out of 'mothers, sisters, daughters, wives' who are supposedly being saved/damned by bills being tabled/stabled. This time '*Ma-behen*' have been given sole mention. Yet aren't they the ones so casually slurred in that disgusting gulley-level *gaali*? In the Hypocritic Code enshrined in Bharat, yes, Mata, women are pedestalised in cliché, but, on the ground, kicked around like aforesaid football. Age-old pains way outnumber grandiosely given gains. Again this week, we've been used to score brownie points. Actually blackening points.

Acchha, since you insist on *chipko*-ing us to a male-ing list – should that more aptly be 'chap'ko – why, pray, are all our other roles being ignored this time? *Cholbey na!* Why are *biwi-behen-beti* not being thunderingly mentioned? Or, live-ins who, *chhee-chhee*, are now wanting equal marital rights? And, which, *hai-hai*! Supreme Court is giving.

erratica

Again, since we've always been a he-mail attachment, it's *stuppid* to ask why women's reservation was *gathbandhan*-ed to delimitation, like bride's *anchal* to groom's *angavastram*. As absurd to mention that 33% was already there in the 2023 Bill. Passed near-unanimously but never implemented – usual gap 'twixt statement and intent, no?

Listen-*ji*, women want not reservation, but equalisation. Not to be 'fair sex', but to be fairly treated. In that Great Protectorate of the home, they don't want to be 'married *off*', bullied, battered, burnt, sexually abused, 'honourably' murdered. Spare them from what Imperial China called *lingchi* and which Taylor Swift correctly translated into her haunting 'Death by a thousand cuts'.

***

Alec Smart said, "'Civil Lines' are to go from cities. They've long gone from society."

TN's Politics Of Urimai

Tamils, who vote today, are used to a political culture that sees welfare as a right (urimai), not benefaction. DMK understands that well. But, its governance deficit is what gives AIADMK an opening. Problem? It's still seen by many as 'reporting' to Delhi

Vignesh Karthik KR

On April 23, Tamil Nadu will elect a new assembly. While news coverage has mainly focused on Bengal and SIR's fallout, TN's is no less consequential an election. Incumbent DMK-led alliance with Stalin as CM seeking a second consecutive term and a reconstituted AIADMK-BJP alliance with E Palaniswami as CM-face aside, the most discussed of this cycle is entrant, actor Vijay's TVK, contesting all 234 seats, having rejected reported offers of seats and CM-ship from NDA. Seeman's NTK, adds a fourth corner.

Making everything count | DMK's re-election bid rests on a claim that is distinctive in Indian politics. It is not merely a welfare story. It is a layering of federal rights, social justice, and welfare delivery into a single political vocabulary. A scheme's naming itself is instructive.

Women's cash transfer scheme, Kalaignar Magalir Urimai Thogai, is framed as an entitlement, a right, not a benefaction. Elsewhere, comparable schemes carry names that signal generosity or protection. In TN, Dravidian-Tamil rhetorical tradition insists on the language of *urimai*, or rights. This reflects political culture, in which welfare has historically been embedded within a larger project of social justice and self-respect, not as a substitute for it.

That layering extends to federalism, the delimitation bill the most recent episode. Stalin has framed this election as a contest between TN and Delhi, anchored in disputes over all centrally administered entrance exams, including NEET, state's declining share of central tax devolution, and pressures from governor's office. The decision to introduce its own pension scheme, rather than wait for Centre to restore Old Pension Scheme, is characteristic of this posture. Vidiyal Payanam free bus travel scheme, Pudhumai Penn scheme for girls' higher education, CM's Breakfast Scheme, are all presented, not as *giveaways*, but as components of what DMK calls Dravidian Model of governance, in which social justice, economic growth and welfare are, held to be, inseparable.

Yet DMK cannot assume this architecture will carry it through. Charges of corruption and dynastic consolidation have given opposition ammunition. AIADMK's accused DMK of nearly doubling state debt and claims that flagship promises from 2021 remain unfulfilled, including scrapping of NEET. Gap between DMK's welfare ambition and lived frustrations of governance in policing, public services, and everyday encounters with the state, remains the most significant opportunity the opposition carries into this election.

That Delhi worry | AIADMK enters, in a condition, its cadres would have found unimaginable, a decade ago. Once the dominant pole of TN's bipolar party system, it has been weakened by the loss of Jayalalithaa, hollowed by factional splits, and diminished by its failure to win any seat in 2024 LS polls. Reunification with BJP, sealed in April 2025, and re-absorption of Dhinakaran's AMMK, are attempts to reconstitute a coalition that can challenge DMK arithmetically.

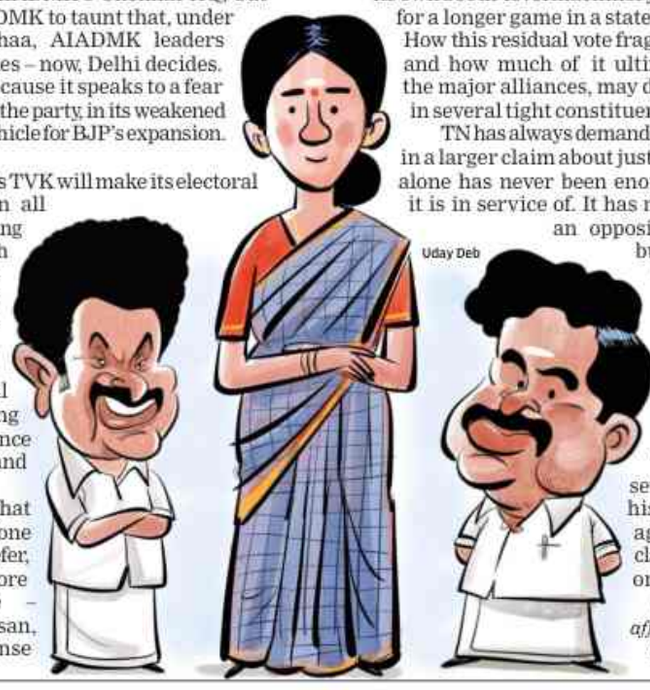
Combined vote shares suggest potential, but mere alliance doesn't guarantee votes' transfer. The two contested together in 2021 and lost convincingly. Silver lining for AIADMK is that it has negotiated shrewdly with its allies, like restricting BJP to 27 seats, while DMK has allotted ten to a hollowed-out party like DMDK.

POLLS 2026
Bengal, TN, Assam, Kerala

The deeper anxiety is structural. The seat-sharing negotiations were conducted, not at AIADMK's Chennai HQ, but in Delhi, prompting DMK to taunt that, under MGR and Jayalalithaa, AIADMK leaders allocated seats to allies – now, Delhi decides. The charge stings, because it speaks to a fear within AIADMK: that the party, in its weakened state, is becoming a vehicle for BJP's expansion.

Vijay & victory | Vijay's TVK will make its electoral debut, going solo on all 234 constituencies, having rejected talks with both NDA and DMK-Congress-Left bloc, SPA. The emotional investment he commands is undeniable. But TN's political history offers a sobering lesson about the distance between adulation and organisation.

The comparison that matters is not the one TVK's supporters prefer, with MGR, but a more uncomfortable one – with Sivaji Ganesan, who possessed immense cinematic stature, but couldn't convert it into a durable political force, because he lacked cadres, organisational depth, and the slow social embedding that sustains electoral power.



Vijay is no new political current. Instead, he's atop several currents in motion: emotional vacuum of AIADMK's decline, a generation's insecurity shaped by gig labour & precarious futures, a recurring search among some TN voters for an alternative to Dravidian majors. That's why he can look politically expansive, without yet being politically coherent. Fans are not cadres. They can become cadres, but only through political work.

Remains of the day | What makes the residual vote share particularly interesting this time is that TVK is a challenge to Seeman's NTK, which grew from 1% vote share in 2016, to 8% in 2024 LS polls. The two parties are at loggerheads, both feeding on the weakening of AIADMK's base, and display the same impatience with the Dravidian duopoly.

BJP, from within the alliance, is staking its own claim on AIADMK's votes, expanding its seat count, building its own booth-level machinery, and positioning itself for a longer game in a state it has never governed. How this residual vote fragments, or consolidates, and how much of it ultimately bleeds back to the major alliances, may determine the outcome in several tight constituencies.

TN has always demanded welfare be embedded in a larger claim about justice and rights. Welfare alone has never been enough – voters ask what it is in service of. It has never simply punished an opposition for being weak, but has waited to see whether weakness produces reinvention, or dependence.

And it has never rewarded a star for stardom alone, it wants to know what lies behind the spectacle. That is the standard set by the state's own history, and is the one against which every claimant will be measured on May 4.

The writer is a research affiliate at King's College London

Why The Blockade Is Trump's Best Card

It hits Iran where it hurts most – its economy – and chokes off Iranian oil. It also helps White House evade US Congressional approval for Op Epic Fury. But, Iran could retaliate and spread the pain

Abhishek Kadiyala

Four days after the first round of peace talks between Iran and US came to a halt without an agreement, US announced a naval blockade of Iranian ports. This blockade has continued even after Iran, if only briefly, announced an end to its blockade of Strait of Hormuz. Now, Trump has extended the ceasefire, but isn't lifting the American blockade. It appears that Washington's intent is to use the blockade of Iranian ports as a central instrument to reshape the terms of dialogue.

For Trump administration, the blockade represents its most effective leverage against Iran in negotiations. This is an instrument that not only hurts Iran financially, militarily, and politically, but is also a convenient option for Trump domestically.

Iran's attempts at negotiating with US were derailed twice – by the joint US-Israel strikes in June 2025, and in Feb this year – leading to deep mistrust. Since then, US has been actively attempting to establish adequate leverage over Iran, with the twin objectives of bringing Tehran back to the negotiating table, and agreeing to key US demands.

Six weeks of joint US-Israel strikes produced only battlefield dominance, without the required negotiating leverage. US and Israel eliminated Iran's leadership, dismantled its air defences, and degraded its missile arsenal. Despite this, they could merely bring Iran to the negotiating table, that too following a threat to commit war crimes by targeting Iran's civilian infra, desalination plants, and power grids. But even this wasn't enough for US to get Iran to agree on issues of its missile stockpile, support for non-state actors, and its nuclear capabilities.

Iran, on the other hand, has a strong geographical advantage with Hormuz. It retained the ability to deny the Strait to commercial shipping, even as its armed forces, leadership, and infra were severely hit. This not only allowed Iran a stronger position while entering the first round of negotiations, but also allowed it to project a dominating political and military presence in the region.

Trump's blockade of Iranian ports is Washington's attempt to neutralise this advantage. It offered a form of pressure that US could sustain through its naval and air superiority, without the institutional constraints that its military campaign was now approaching.

Note, on April 29, Operation Epic Fury will reach its 60-day mark, triggering War Powers Resolution, 1973, that would force the administration to seek Congressional approval before continuing the campaign. The blockade, by contrast, is structured to operate outside this constraint, and is not limited by time-bound Congressional approval.

Image: AI

Decades of Congressional sanctions legislation against Iran, including the Iran Sanctions Act, CISADA, and CAATSA, have established implied Congressional approval. This is furthered by International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) that allows the executive to use any federal agency, including Department of War, to enforce sanctions in case of emergencies.

US national emergency with respect to Iran has been in continuous effect since Jimmy Carter declared it in response to the 1979 hostage crisis. Trump reinforced that declaration through an executive order on Feb 6 this year, invoking IEEPA three weeks before hostilities began.

Iran endured the six-week onslaught of US-Israel attacks through its control of Hormuz, energy sales after US temporarily waived sanctions, and domestic economic sustainability that came as a result of this. However, the US blockade of Iranian ports has the potential to upend this sustainability.

Nearly 90% of Iran's around $109 bn trade passes through its southern shipping lanes, that pass through Hormuz. A blockade would result in an estimated daily loss of over $435mn. Ports like Chabahar, and those on Caspian Sea that can be considered relatively safe from the blockade, account only for under 5% of trade. Additionally, the $159mn daily imports of food, machinery, and medical supplies to Iran, are also significantly impacted by the blockade. This could worsen Iran's inflation crisis, severely weakening an already struggling economy, resulting in domestic backlash against the regime, as seen during the Dec 2025 protests.

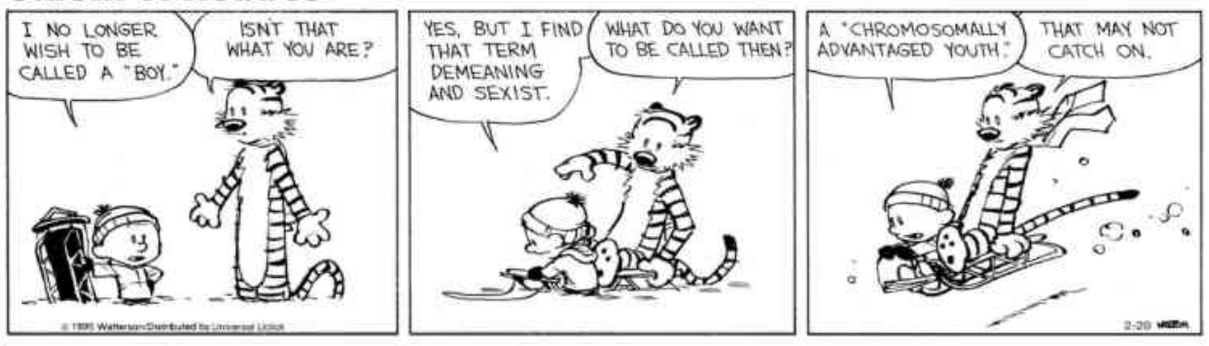
Iran's supply routes to its Houthi allies also operate via Gulf of Oman, going to Houthi ports in Yemen, or exchange locations near Somalia and Eritrea. Thus, the US blockade would also weaken the impact of a potential Houthi-led blockade of Bab-el-Mandeb Strait.

Regionally, a blockade would reassert US dominance, and reassure its Gulf partners. By demonstrating that US Navy can enforce maritime exclusion across the Iranian coastline, Washington signals control over sea lanes of communication that Gulf states depend on. That signal carries diplomatic value, independent of any nuclear agreement.

The blockade, however, has several financial, practical, and military constraints, ranging from its financial cost to the omnipresent risk of an Iranian retaliation, or a breakdown of the negotiations. Iran, yesterday, reportedly seized two ships in Hormuz. A resolution, therefore, seems distant.

The writer is a research analyst at the Takshashila Institution

Calvin & Hobbes


I NO LONGER WISH TO BE CALLED A "BOY."
ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU ARE?
YES, BUT I FIND THAT TERM DEMEANING AND SEXIST.
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE CALLED THEN?
A "CHROMOSOMALLY ADVANTAGED YOUTH."
THAT MAY NOT CATCH ON.

Sacred*space*

I regard consciousness as fundamental. I regard matter as derivative from consciousness. We cannot get behind consciousness. Everything that we talk about, everything that we regard as existing, postulates consciousness.

Max Planck

Unselfing From The 'Relentless Ego'

Jug Suraiya

In the glow of a new-born day, poet-priest Gerard Manley Hopkins saw a bird soaring high above the Earth, a vision that inspired him to write one of the most joyous poems in English literature, *The Windhover*, in which the effortless flight of a falcon evokes the universality of Christ's covenant of transcendence, the affirmation that the kingdom of Heaven is not an ethereal realm out there, but is right here, in this world, in the here and now, in each and every one of us, awaiting the rapture of realisation.

"I caught this morning morning's minion,/Kingdom of daylight's dauphin,/Dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon in his riding/Of the rolling level underneath…/…My heart in hiding/Stirred for a bird/The achieve of, the mastery of the thing!"

Novelist-philosopher Iris Murdoch would describe Hopkins's experience as a classic example of what she called 'unselfing', a spontaneous meditative process which engages us and jettisons the burden we all carry, that of the 'fat, relentless ego' which, like an ill-mannered individual, is forever shoving and elbowing to put itself ahead of others for its own self-serving ends.

Our everyday consciousness is based on what phenomenologists call 'intentionality', which, like a movie projector, displays on the screen of our mind the world as seen through the filter of our wants and wishes.

Unselfing is the Delete button, which removes, however momentarily, the self-centred ego from our consciousness and allows it to direct a 'just and loving gaze' upon the world as viewed without the bias of intentionality.

Unselfing is the key concept of Murdoch's 1970 book, *The Sovereignty of Good*, which lays the foundation of a moral philosophy that goes beyond religion, and even the concept of God.

Unselfing is an exaltation of the spirit, a liberation from the shackles of intentional I-sight, and is induced by a contemplation of beauty, in nature, art, or even in everyday things seen through unselfed eyes.

THE SPEAKING TREE

As with Hopkins, it was a bird in exultant flight that afforded Murdoch a glimpse of transcendence. "I am looking out of my window in an anxious and resentful state of mind…brooding perhaps on some damage done to my prestige. Then suddenly I observe a hovering kestrel. In a moment everything is altered. The brooding self with its hurt vanity has disappeared. There is nothing now but kestrel."

Unselfing cannot be brought about by a force of will, for that only buttresses the ego; unselfing involves a will-less surrender of the self to a greater, more intensely felt, reality.

In *The Sovereignty of Good*, Murdoch asserts that unselfing removes the barrier of the otherness of others, the individual and the universal become indivisible without the brokerage of religion or God.

Unselfing is an unasked-for benediction, a boon that cannot be premeditated or predicted. It is an unsolicited gift that, literally, catches us unawares.

If we are fortunate enough to receive such a gift, which has no purpose, or use, other than being itself, we can do with it whatever we might. Compose a poem, or write a philosophical treatise, or take a mental image of the moment – an unselfie, if you like – and secure it in the Inbox of revisitable memory.

Bengal's Missing Voters Set Phase 1 Tone

Today's Polling Will Largely Be About The Disenfranchisement Under SIR Of 27 Lakh Voters Who Had All Proof Of Voting Rights

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

When the first vote is cast at 7am today to decide who will be governing Bengal for the next five years, there will be an elephant in the polling booth: SIR, or the Special Intensive Revision of the voters' roll.

More than 3.6 crore voters across 152 constituencies will be exercising their franchise in the first phase of the 2026 state assembly poll; the rest of the 6.82 crore voters in the other 142 constituencies will follow them next Wednesday. But this election — more so in the seats going to vote today — will be as much about the disenfranchisement of 27 lakh voters who will not be able to vote despite having proof of voting rights.

The Election Commission has found that these 27 lakh voters have some "logical discrepancy" or the other. This can mean anything, from misspelt names to surname mismatches (with parents) to monks serving in missions whose legal guardians are the heads of those missions. The 16 districts going to vote today have a voting strength that is 9.4% less than what it used to be before the SIR exercise (a significant portion, probably about half, are dead or "absent" or "shifted" voters).

Nowhere is SIR's shadow longer than in Murshidabad, which has lost 7.4 lakh voters, and Malda, which has lost 4.5 lakh. It is Murshidabad that encapsulates everything that has gone wrong with SIR, originally meant to weed out non-voters but which has disenfranchised people voting for years.

More than 4.5 lakh of the 7.4 lakh total deletions in this district happened during the "judicial adjudication" phase (to determine "logical discrepancy"). The most drastic impact is in Shamsherganj constituency, often described as ground zero of the crisis. Exactly 74,775 voters — representing a staggering 32% of the electorate — has been disenfranchised, sparking a legal and political battle that may rage even after the new assembly is formed.

All this has taken some sheen off the electoral battles in bellwether constituencies and those involving political heavyweights. But the first phase does have these, too, in good measure: the political future of at least three such heavyweights — BJP's Suvendu Adhikari and Dilip Ghosh and Congress's Adhir Chowdhury — hinges on how voters vote today (though Adhikari has a second chance in the second phase, as he is contesting from Bhowanipore as well against CM Mamata Banerjee).

TMC chief Mamata Banerjee has doubled down on Bengali identity, while BJP's Suvendu Adhikari has highlighted governance issues

Adhikari, who has spent the last few years shrugging off "defector" barbs, now faces a defector himself in his home seat, Nandigram. His challenger is Pabitra Kar, a former Adhikari acolyte with strong ties with Hindu organisations who is credited with securing a 3,500-vote lead for Adhikari in the critical Boyal area in the 2021 election. CM Banerjee stationed herself there for several hours and alleged large-scale manipulation, photographs of which went viral (and still the subject of a court battle). Adhikari scraped through with a 1,956-vote margin. Kar, this time, may give his former mentor some sleepless nights till May 4, when votes will be counted.

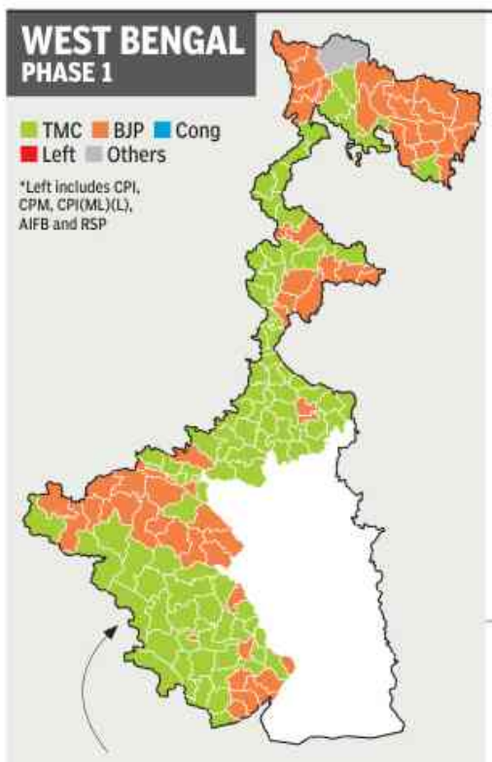
Over 280km away, Congress veteran Chowdhury is fighting his own battle for political survival in Behrampore. Chowdhury is a five-time MP but is now eyeing a path to political rehabilitation through the Bengal assembly after losing the last Lok Sabha poll. BJP won this seat in 2021 and the fight this time is likely to be intensely triangular, with Trinamool forming the third side (along with BJP and Congress).

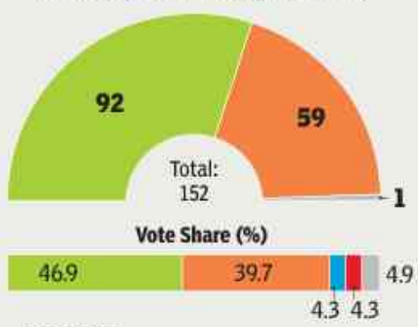
BJP veteran Ghosh faces a similar situation in his own home seat, Kharagpur Sadar, where he is returning after 10 years. It was his victory over former Congress cabinet minister Gyan Singh Sohanpal in 2016 that marked his ascendancy with the BJP's state unit but he was forced by his own party to forsake the region he knew so well in the 2024 Lok Sabha poll. Ghosh will be hoping that Kharagpur backs him a second time.

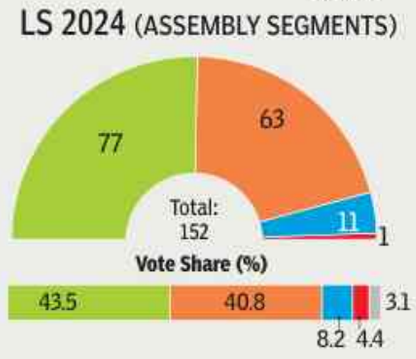
Another political dynasty that is looking for succour is former Congress Union minister ABA Ghani Khan Choudhury's family. The district is seeing Khan Choudhury's niece, Mausam Benazir Noor, fighting to reclaim the family's political legacy after switching back to Congress after a stint with Trinamool and a term in the Rajya Sabha. But this district, too, is likely to see a tripolar fight — and arithmetic can be slippery in such contests.

Many of the 16 districts that go to the polls today — from Darjeeling in the Hills to East Midnapore on the Bay of Bengal's shores — have been BJP strongholds, and the party would be betting on SIR deletions to keep it that way. Nine of these 16 districts — Cooch Behar, Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, Kalimpong, North Dinajpur, South Dinajpur, Malda and Bankura — gave BJP 38 (of a total 66), which ultimately helped it reach the 77-seat figure it had in the last assembly.

But the voter anger and the consequent anti-BJP consolidation visible outside polling booths across districts may also have something to offer to Trinamool at the EVMs. How much that anger transforms into anti-BJP votes and the number of seats to which Trinamool can restrict BJP in these 16 districts can well shape the configuration of the next Bengal assembly.







Total Seats	SC Seats	ST Seats
152 of 294	34	15
Total Candidates	**Women Candidates**	
1,478	385	
Total Voters	**Men**	**Women**
3.6Cr	1.8Cr	1.8Cr

HOT SEATS

Nandigram

Adhikari, who has spent five years shrugging off defector barbs after switching from TMC, now faces a defector himself. Adhikari defeated CM Mamata Banerjee here in 2021 by 1,956 votes. His one-time confidant, Kar, is his TMC challenger. Identity politics continues to dominate the landscape, with demographics expected to play a critical role. The 2011 Census recorded Hindus at 65.8% and Muslims at 34% of the population here. But under SIR, 12,500 Muslim voters were removed. Sabar Institute says gross deletions in Nandigram stand at 14,462, with Muslim voters accounting for 95.5% of deletions. Key issues on the ground, say residents, is haphazard development symbolised by, among other things, a standing structure for a railway station but with no rail link to the area.

Past Winners: **2011 (TMC), 2016 (TMC), 2021 (BJP)**

Siliguri

This North Bengal seat has transitioned from being a Left bastion for 30 years to a BJP stronghold now. In 2016, the Left reclaimed the seat from Trinamool, but a decisive shift occurred in 2021, when Shankar Ghosh, a former CPM leader, won it for the BJP with a margin of over 35,000 votes over Trinamool's Om Prakash Mishra. The 2026 election centres on the demand for a separate Siliguri district. Currently, the city is split between Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts, forcing residents to travel up to 50-80km for administrative tasks. Deb, the Trinamool candidate and mayor, has proposed a 12-point roadmap for driving the separate district demand. Ghosh is offering a master plan for infrastructure and smart city development. According to Sabar Institute, gross SIR deletions in Siliguri is 42,979 voters.

Past Winners: **2011 (TMC), 2016 (CPM), 2021 (BJP)**

Kharagpur Sadar

Ghosh returns to this assembly seat after 10 years even as he battles to reclaim his standing within BJP. A former state BJP president, he first gained prominence here in 2016 by defeating Congress MLA Gyan Singh Sohanpal. The challenge this time for contestants in this constituency with historically narrow victory margins is the massive voter roll purge — analysis by Sabar Institute shows gross deletions under the Special Intensive Revision at over 60,730 voters. Ghosh's primary challenger this time around is Trinamool rather than Congress. BJP retained the seat in 2021 but its winning candidate in the last election, Hiran Chatterjee, has moved to another constituency. Ghosh now faces the Trinamool's Pradip Sarkar, who is stressing on his local roots and has questioned why BJP has moved out past representatives from the seat.

Past Winners: **2011 (Cong), 2016 (BJP), 2021 (BJP)**

Dinhata

This border constituency about 700km north of Kolkata is a crucible of geography, migration, and contested control over land. Historically a stronghold of Forward Bloc patriarch Kamal Guha, the region has transitioned from the bloody intra-Left clashes to a fierce modern-day duel between Trinamool's Udayan Guha and a rising BJP. The 2026 contest between state minister Guha and BJP's Ajay Ray is framed by a legacy of structural violence. The Rajbanshi community and refugee groups hold the key to poll fortunes here. While BJP has successfully weaponised identity — citing infiltration and the persecution of minorities in nearby Rangpur — Trinamool is banking on organisational dominance and welfare schemes. Deletion of Rajbanshi names in SIR and the issue of NRC notices is bound to queer the pitch for BJP.

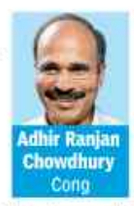
Past Winners: **2011 (AIFB), 2016 (TMC), 2021 (BJP)**

Malatipur

It's a three-way fight for this seat in the heart of Malda that pits the endurance of political dynasties against the might of state welfare. Once a Congress stronghold, the seat is now the focus of an emotional and mathematical battle as Mausam Benazir Noor — banking on the legacy of her uncle ABA Ghani Khan Chowdhury — returns to Congress after a seven-year stint with Trinamool. Her biggest challenger is Trinamool's Abdur Rahim Boxi, who won here in 2021 by over 91,000 votes. Boxi is banking on TMC's direct welfare delivery, arguing that CM Banerjee has inherited the developmental ethos once championed by the Khan Choudhury family. BJP's Ashish Das would be looking to build on the party's success in the 2024 Malda North Lok Sabha seat. The minority vote in this Muslim-majority seat (over 60% of voters) had consolidated behind TMC in 2021, but that vote bank now faces a potential split — which could favour BJP — with Mausam Noor's return.

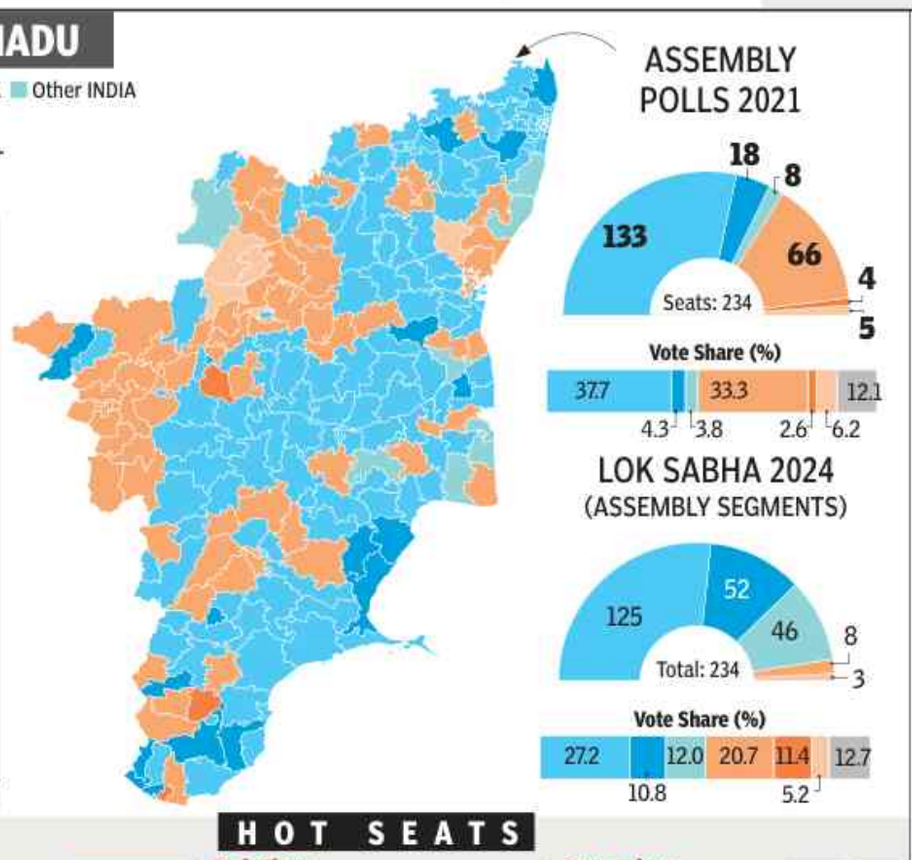
Past Winners: **2011 (RSP), 2016 (Cong), 2021 (TMC)**

Behrampore



Behrampore, a Congress bastion of 70 years, is now the stage for a high-stakes triangular showdown featuring incumbent Subrata Maitra of BJP, Trinamool Congress's Naru Gopal Mukherjee, and Congress heavyweight Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, who's made a dramatic return to state politics after nearly 30 years. Maitra is banking on hyper-local campaigning and a hardline narrative against "infiltration" and corruption under the Mamata Banerjee govt, while Mukherjee, the local municipality chairperson, is counting on welfare schemes to woo voters. For five-time MP Adhir, it is a battle of survival, legacy and political resurrection, but he goes into it backed by a weakened party organisation. Communal polarisation is the main factor here — Behrampore has 70% Hindu voters — and campaigning has been defined by temple visits and raking up of issues surrounding identity politics.

Past Winners: **2011, 2016 (Cong), 2021 (BJP)**



Total Seats	
234	
SC Seats: 44	
ST seats: 02	
Total Candidates	
4,023	
Women candidates	
442	
Total Voters	
5.7Cr	
Men: 2.8Cr	
Women: 2.9Cr	

HOT SEATS

Edappadi

This seat in Salem district has long been the home turf of ADMK general secretary EPS. He has won five of the eight poll battles that he has fought here, including three in a row since 2011. Backed by his community, the gounders, Palaniswami would be feeling confident about his chances here despite the challenge from DMK and colleagues-turned-foes such as O Panneerselvam and V K Sasikala.

Past Winners: **2011, 2016, 2021 (ADMK)**

Kolathur

Kolathur in Chennai has been represented by CM MK Stalin since it was formed in 2011. In 2021, he defeated his ADMK rival by a margin of more than 70,000 votes. DMK would be banking on Stalin's accessibility, governance record, and the party's organisational strength to maintain its winning run here. The opposition has highlighted local issues and governance shortcomings.

Past Winners: **2011, 2016, 2021 (DMK)**

Perambur

This seat in north Chennai is where actor Joseph Vijay is making his poll debut. With a large working-class population, it was a Left bastion before turning into a DMK stronghold in recent years. Incumbent Sekar won by a margin of more than 54,000 votes in 2021. Vijay chose the seat because 40,000 voters signed up on the TVP app and he hopes to win over Dalits and minorities.

Past Winners: **2011 (CPM); 2016 (ADMK); 2021 (DMK)**

Lalgudi

Leema Rose Martin, wife of lottery baron Santiago Martin and the richest candidate in these polls — she's declared assets worth more than Rs 1,000 crore — is in the fray here. She joined ADMK only in Feb, but has the ADMK rank and file working overtime to ensure her victory. DMK, which has won this seat eight times since 1971, has fielded a low-profile candidate to replace sitting MLA Soundarapandian.

Past Winners: **2011, 2016, 2021 (DMK)**

Madurai Central

IT minister Palanivel Thiagarajan is seeking a hat-trick of wins here. But he faces a fight, as ADMK's backing ally Puthiya Neethi Katchi (PNK)'s Sundar C. The actor-director's wife, Khushbu, herself an actor, has added a touch of glamour to his campaign. TVK's VMS Mustafa and NTK's K Abdul Hakkim could split the minority votes, which might hurt DMK.

Past Winners: **2011 (DMDK); 2016, 2021 (DMK)**

Chepauk-Triplicane

This Chennai seat has been with DMK since 2011. Deputy CM and CM MK Stalin's son, Udhayanidhi Stalin, won here by more than 69,000 votes in his first election in 2021. It has a sizeable number of Muslim voters who can shape the outcome. DMK's focused on its welfare measures while the opposition spoke of local grievances such as parking issues, narrow roads, etc.

Past Winners: **2011, 2016, 2021 (DMK)**

Stalin holds edge, but dark horse Vijay keeps rivals guessing

Mayilvaganan.V@timesofindia.com

DMK chief M K Stalin is looking for a second straight term while EPS battles to keep himself, and ADMK, relevant in Tamil politics. The two legacy parties have newcomer Vijay's TVK to worry about

After five weeks of intense campaigning by four contending sides in Tamil Nadu, one question remains: will the disruptor help the incumbent, the opposition or himself? Conventional analyses still give the M K Stalin-led Secular Progressive Alliance (SPA) an edge over Edappadi K Palaniswami's National Democratic Alliance (NDA), but the vote share of Vijay's TVK could tilt the balance.

The campaign began as a contest over governance and welfare, and gradually sharpened into a larger political argument about identity, federalism and the state's place in the Union. Thanks to Stalin's efforts at making it a Centre-vs-state battle, the campaign maintained a nationalised tone punctuated by Tamil Nadu's distinct political idioms.

DMK began the campaign with the advantage of a strong alliance, a governance track record and visible welfare delivery. Chief minister and DMK president Stalin, who launched his campaign symbolically from his father M Karunanidhi's native Tiruvarur, foregrounded schemes for women and youth. As the days passed, his messaging shifted to a sustained attack on the BJP-led Union govt. Increasingly, Stalin reminded voters of the "injustice" the Centre had done to the state, and warned voters what it might do if its ally, ADMK, returned to power.

Gradually, the monthly cash transfers and free bus rides for women and the free breakfast scheme for school students receded behind a sharper political pitch. At the peak of the campaign, Stalin donned a black shirt and dramatically set fire to a copy of the delimitation bill, framing the election as a defence of Tamil Nadu's rights against Delhi. Yet, in his quieter, direct outreach — his morning walks and surprise visits to beneficiaries — he returned to the language of welfare and delivery.

At the close of campaigning, Stalin attempted to strike that balance. "My first signature after getting re-elected would be on the order to distribute Rs 8,000 coupons to women," he said.

Deputy chief minister Udhayanidhi Stalin crisscrossed the state with van-top speeches. While Stalin spoke in chaste Tamil, Udhayanidhi opted for a more conversational, witty style, often targeting EPS. Congress netas Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge, apast from AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal and RJD's Tejashwi Yadav, campaigned for the alliance, but Rahul and Stalin not sharing a dais triggered rumours of a disconnect.

NDA brought in its own national firepower, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amit Shah holding roadshows and rallies. While Andhra Pradesh chief minister Chandrababu Naidu campaigned briefly, the alliance's most consistent campaigner was EPS.

Positioning himself as a self-made leader, EPS kept his messaging simple and direct, focusing on women's safety, drugs and alleged governance failures of DMK. Beginning his post-model code campaign in Mylapore for BJP candidate Tamilisai Soundararajan, he travelled extensively, primarily attacking Stalin and Udhayanidhi. Repeatedly called by DMK a "BJP slave", and after Udhayanidhi taunted him with an old image of his falling at V K Sasikala's feet, EPS made personal attacks at the Karunanidhi family.

The alliance arithmetic — bringing together BJP, PMK and AMMK — added heft to NDA. The exclusion of former BJP state chief K Annamalai from the candidate list led to reports of discontent, but he eventually joined the campaign. State BJP president Nainar Nagendran found his voice drowned in the high-decibel presence of national netas, while PMK's Anbumani Ramadoss focused on consolidating vanniyar support in northern and western districts for NDA.

And the wildcard Vijay continued to wreak havoc. Campaigning less but drawing large crowds, he attempted to frame the contest as one between DMK and TVK, targeting Stalin while avoiding direct attacks on EPS and BJP. Contesting in Perambur and Trichy East, and fielding candidates in 233 seats, his presence loomed larger than his limited campaign hours suggested.

A **TOI** analysis of the final week of the campaign showed Stalin spoke for 356 minutes, EPS for 800 minutes, and Vijay just 35. Yet, Vijay's appearances carried high recall value — an indication that visibility and impact are no longer directly proportional in the age of spectacle politics.

Both Stalin and EPS chose largely to ignore Vijay. The nearest Stalin got to target him was when he urged voters in Perambur to choose between an "inaccessible newcomer who enacts a drama" and "a leader who would be accessible and responsive". Naam Tamilar Katchi's Seeman made up for the DMK and ADMK by targeting Vijay while waxing eloquent on Tamil identity and self-respect politics.

All the contenders took to social media with a vengeance, churning out promos, influencer videos and memes. Despite its strong arguments against the perceived rise in crime and corruption, the ADMK-led alliance couldn't turn the anti-incumbent sentiment into a wave. If TVK chips away from the anti-govt votes — and fails to win big on its own — and if the average voter chooses continuity and welfare, DMK could be on a strong wicket.

TIMES GLOBAL

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2026

ANNE HATHAWAY'S AWKWARD PHASE IN HOLLYWOOD LASTED DECADES, SAYS SHE STRUGGLED TO FIND HER FOOTING AND FEEL CHILL IN SOCIAL SETTINGS

THERE IS NOTHING MORE TRULY ARTISTIC THAN TO LOVE PEOPLE — VINCENT VAN GOGH

JUSTIN THEROUX 'IS IN HEAVEN' AFTER EMBRACING FATHERHOOD: 'IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL THING THAT'S EVER HAPPENED TO ME'

UK man admits to raping PIO woman in religiously motivated attack

Naomi Canton

London: A British man has admitted to raping a Sikh woman "whom he thought was a Muslim" at her home. John Ashby (32), of no fixed abode, admitted charges of rape, robbery, strangulation and racially/religiously aggravated assault occasioning actual bodily harm at Birmingham Crown Court on Tuesday. He changed his plea to guilty on the second day of the trial about an hour after a Sikh member of the public approached the dock and said: "Sort your s**t out."

The jury heard how he followed the woman off a bus in Walsall on Oct 25 last year and forced his way into her home armed with a two-foot stick while she was upstairs in the bathroom. The woman tried to lock the door but Ashby barged in, turned the light off and raped and assaulted her. "...Throughout the attack, he racially and religiously abused her," prosecutor Phil Bradley KC said. The attack only ended because he heard a noise and fled, taking her jewellery and mobile with him.

Ashby was arrested in Perry Barr two days after the attack. During the police interrogation, when shown a picture of the woman, he asked: "Why isn't she wearing a hijab?"

Pipeline restarts Russian oil flows to Europe, unblocking EU loan for Kyiv

Budapest/Brussels: Russian oil flowed through the Ukrainian section of the Druzhba pipeline on Wednesday after a halt lasting months, officials said, allowing Hungary to lift its veto on a €90 billion EU loan urgently needed by Kyiv. The Druzhba pipeline has become one of the most politically charged pieces of infrastructure in Europe since a Russian drone strike damaged the pipeline in western Ukraine and stopped Russian oil deliveries to Hungary and Slovakia.

Hungarian oil group MOL said on Wednesday that Ukraine had informed it that deliveries of Russian crude had resumed through the pipeline. "MOL expects the first crude oil shipments following the restart of the Ukrainian section of the pipeline system to arrive in Hungary and Slovakia by tomorrow," it said. REUTERS

From threats to 'Taco' Tuesday: Trump indefinitely pauses war

Didn't Seek Truce, Have No Obligation To Reciprocate: Iran Officials

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

Washington: Amid expected taunts of TACO–Trump Always Chickens Out – US President Donald Trump on Tuesday extended the ceasefire with Iran indefinitely, hours after threatening fresh bombardment and predicting an imminent deal with Tehran.

The decision, presented by the White House as a strategic pause to facilitate diplomacy, has instead deepened a perception in Washington that the administration's Iran policy is less a doctrine and more of a mood swing, and it is being improvised in real time.

Trump's public rationale has been characteristically expansive, and evasive. He has argued that Tehran needs time to present a "unified proposal", that economic pressure is steadily eroding Iran's position, and that backchannel diplomacy via Pakistan deserves more runway. He has also suggested that Iran's leadership is divided and that extending the ceasefire allows those internal fissures to widen, potentially yielding a more favourable negotiating outcome for the US.

Yet behind the official explanation lies a more pragmatic calculation. With global markets jittery, oil routes under strain, and Tehran signalling reluctance even to show up for talks, Washington was facing an unenviable choice between escalation into a potentially costly conflict and backing down from its own threats. The indefinite extension of the ceasefire has effectively chosen a third path — delaying confrontation while maintaining pressure, and attempting to reframe retreat as leverage.

The move has not gone unnoticed by critics. In Washington policy circles and on Wall Street, which has been on a tear despite the war, the TACO Tuesday label, once confined to trading desks reacting to tariff brinkmanship, has migrated into the mainstream as a way of describing a recurring Trump tantrum — maximalist threats followed by abrupt about-turn. Trump's rhetoric over the past week has veered from warnings of devastation to expressions of optimism about imminent, almost-done deals, creating a bizarre dichotomy in Washington.

AFP

A videograb shows an Iranian missile mounted on a launcher vehicle on display during a pro-govt rally in Arak town in central Iran on Tuesday

Pak intensifies efforts, meets UK & Iran envoys

Pakistan on Wednesday intensified its efforts to bring the US and Iran back to the negotiating table to end the war in West Asia. Following the necessary space provided by the truce, Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif received Iranian ambassador Reza Amiri Moghadam and "discussed the ongoing regional situation and peace efforts." Separately, deputy PM Ishaq Dar spoke with Turkish foreign minister Hakan Fidan and exchanged views on the latest regional developments. Dar also received British high commissioner Jane Marriott at his office, and they "discussed the evolving regional situation". PTI

In Tehran, the response has been a mix of official defiance and unofficial gloating. Iranian officials have pointedly noted that they did not request a ceasefire extension and are under no obligation to reciprocate. On social media, where pro-Iran accounts have been on the rampage, trolls have portrayed the development as evidence that Washington has blinked under pressure. That narrative gained traction after Iranian forces moved to seize two commercial vessels in Strait of Hormuz.

Hovering over the entire episode is the ghost of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the 2015 agreement that Trump famously trashed and withdrew from during his first term, criticising his predecessor Barack Obama — whose middle name, Hussein, he deliberately emphasises — of selling out to Iran. A growing number of analysts now suggest that, for all the rhetoric, the endgame may look strikingly similar to the JCPOA deal Trump once derided. Iran seeks sanctions relief and recognition of its regional standing; the US seeks limits on nuclear activity and assurances of maritime stability. Such a deal is not radically different from those negotiated under Obama—cruel irony for a man who hates Barack "Hussein" Obama.

US blocked $500m cash shipment to Iraq over pro-Iran attacks: Report

Baghdad/Dubai: The US has halted a shipment of about $500 million in cash bound for Iraq and suspended parts of its security cooperation with Baghdad, in a move aimed at pressuring the Iraqi govt over the actions of Iran-backed militias, Iraqi sources said.

The measures were taken as the fallout from the Iran war increasingly pulls Iraq into the conflict, with Iran-aligned armed groups in Iraq launching repeated drone and rocket attacks on US facilities and neighbouring states in support of Tehran.

Five Iraqi sources said the move was limited to shipments of physical US currency, between $450 million and $500 million, that are periodically flown into Baghdad. The US treasury department and the Federal Reserve did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The move was first reported by the Wall Street journal. An Iraqi central bank official said there had been no formal notice of a halt to deliveries. A shipment expected in April had not arrived, and the status of another expected in May was unclear, the official said. REUTERS

Iran oil tankers go dark to sail past US blockade

At least two fully laden Iranian tankers have sailed out of the Persian Gulf and past a US blockade this week, part of a flotilla that has made its way around the warships and ferried roughly 9 million barrels of oil to the market. The Hero II and Hedy, two Iran-flagged, very-large crude carriers, are the latest to be captured in satellite imagery, moving past the line identified by the US and into the Arabian Sea on April 20, according to data intelligence firm Vortexa. The pair can together carry as much as 4 million barrels of oil.

The exit of laden tankers demonstrates the limits of US efforts to cordon off Tehran's crude exports — which President Trump has described as a "tremendous success" — and pressure an otherwise resilient Iranian regime into concessions. Since the blockade began last week, the US Navy has seized an Iran-linked cargo vessel and boarded a sanctioned oil tanker in waters east of Sri Lanka, widening its targeted area. BLOOMBERG

Nepal home min resigns over wealth scrutiny, 2nd cabinet exit in a month

Vishant.Agarwala
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Nepal home minister Sudan Gurung, a hand-picked aide of PM Balendra Shah, resigned on Wednesday amid scrutiny of his wealth disclosures, investments and alleged business links with businessman and power broker Deepak Bhatta, who is being investigated in a money-laundering case. In a day of dramatic developments, Shah took charge of the home ministry after Gurung's exit, just 26 days after his govt took office.

Gurung's resignation is the second ministerial setback for Shah within weeks. On April 9, Shah sacked labour, employment and social security minister Deepak Kumar Sah after a panel found that he had misused his position to keep his wife, Junu Shrestha, on the health insurance board, a move the party said had breached its code of conduct and discipline.

A former event manager and nightclub DJ who founded NGO Hami Nepal after helping with relief work during the 2015 earthquake, Gurung had emerged as one of the leaders of last year's deadly Gen Z protests. Notably, Shah and Gurung joined the ruling Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) together on Jan 18.

Nepal minister Sudhan Gurung (L) bids farewell at his office in Kathmandu on Wednesday

Announcing his resignation, Gurung said he was stepping down to allow a probe and avoid any conflict of interest. The controversy began after ministers' asset declarations were made public on April 12. Gurung declared shares and securities, 1.04kg of gold, 6kg of silver, more than Nepali Ruprees 61 lakh (INR 38 lakh) in cash, a vehicle and land in Dhankuta. The disclosures triggered questions over the wealth of a politician who had built his image around activism and clean governance.

Gurung denied concealing the investments, saying they were part of his declared portfolio. "Someone who intends to hide assets does not openly declare over Rs 20 million in investments," he said earlier.

No decision yet on going to Pak for talks with US: Iran

▶ Continued from P1

We have made it clear that if we conclude that going to Islamabad is in our national interest, we would go there. But for the time being, the decision has not yet been made," Baqaei told BBC Wednesday.

In a statement on seizing two ships, IRGC said, "Two violating ships, MSC-FRANCESCA (related to the Zionist regime) and EPAMINONDAS, which endangered maritime security by operating without the necessary permits and tampering with navigation systems, were seized by the IRGC navy and directed to the coast of Iran. Disruption of order and safety in the Strait of Hormuz is our red line." The IRGC-affiliated Fars news agency said a vessel identified as Euphoria was struck and is now grounded off Iran's coast. The MSC-chartered Epaminondas was sailing through the strait eastbound about 15 nautical miles northeast of Oman when it was fired upon by an IRGC gunboat. A UK Maritime Trade Operations warning said, "The master of a container ship reported that the vessel was approached by one IRGC gun boat, no VHF challenge that then fired upon the vessel which has caused heavy damage to the bridge." It added, "No fires or environmental impact reported. All crew reported safe."

Iran to free women whose release I demanded: Trump

Washington: US President Donald Trump on Wednesday said Iran respected his request, will free women whose release he demanded. The president said he has been informed that four of the women will be "released immediately," while four others will be sentenced to one month each in prison.

"I very much appreciate that Iran, and its leaders, respected my request ... and terminated the planned execution," Trump wrote on Truth Social. He said the women protesters were expected to be executed Wednesday.

Rights groups that monitor Iran had said two of the women were already released on bail in March, and two others were known to face charges that carry the death sentences. They had been arrested during the anti-govt protests in Jan. The Iranian judiciary responded promptly, denying that any of them were on the verge of execution, saying some were already released.

'Extended Russian oil sanctions waiver after requests'

US treasury secretary Scott Bessent said on Wednesday that he extended sanctions relief on Russian seaborne oil for 30 days because of requests from countries that are vulnerable to oil shortages from the closed Strait of Hormuz. Bessent told a senate subcommittee budget hearing that the requests came from finance leaders of 10 countries. AGENCIES

NZ min's 'butter chicken tsunami' remark on FTA with India sparks row

Wellington: A senior New Zealand minister has sparked outrage by deriding a planned free trade deal with India as a "butter chicken tsunami". Wellington is poised to sign a free trade agreement with India in New Delhi next week.

The New Zealand govt has hailed it as a "once in a generation" deal that will give its businesses access to the world's most populated country's vast domestic market. But its ruling coalition partner, the right-wing populist NZ First party, has pulled support over fears it will open the country's borders to thousands of Indian nationals. The split will mean govt will need the opposition Labour Party to support it when legislation goes to parliament in the coming months.

On Monday the party's deputy leader and minister for regional development **Shane Jones** said his party would "never accept" the deal. "I don't care how much criticism we get, I am just never going to agree with a butter chicken tsunami coming to New Zealand," Jones told Reality Check Radio.

The comments were widely condemned as racist by Indian community groups in New Zealand. "It's incredibly worrying for everybody," Shanti Patel, president of the Auckland Indian Association, said.

And opposition lawmaker Priyanca Radhakrishnan described them as "outright racism". "It's unacceptable and politicians shouldn't be making statements like he has," she said.

New Zealand PM Christopher Luxon said Jones' comments were "unhelpful". Officials have told AFP the deal could see more than 20,000 Indian migrants entering the country. Labour Party officials are yet to decide whether they will support it, citing similar concerns regarding that investment. AFP

TOI LINE OF NO CONTROL — SANDEEP ADHWARYU

Did ChatGPT offer advice to gunman who killed 2 in Florida last year? US launches criminal investigation

Orlando: Florida's attorney general on Tuesday opened a rare criminal investigation in—to OpenAI's ChatGPT over whether the AI app offered advice to a gunman who killed two people and wounded six others last year at Florida State University.

Attorney general James Uthmeier said that prosecutors had done an initial review of chat logs between ChatGPT and the gunman, Phoenix Ikner, to determine if the AI app aided, abetted or advised the commission of a crime. Prosecutors believe the chatbot advised Ikner on what type of gun and ammunition to use, whether a gun would be useful at short range, and what time of day and at which location would allow for the most potential victims, Uthmeier said.

"My prosecutors have looked at this, and they've told me if it was a person at the other end of that screen, we would be charging them with murder," Uthmeier said at a news conference in Tampa. "Now, of course, ChatGPT is not a person, but that does not absolve our office and my prosecution team from our duty to probe whether there is criminal culpability here."

Florida's office of statewide prosecution has subpoenaed OpenAI for records of its training materials regarding threats to harm others, and for its policies on reporting "possible past, present, or future crime," according to the attorney general's office.

OpenAI spokeswoman Kate Waters called the FSU shooting a tragedy but said the company had no responsibility. The company proactively shared information with law enforcement and continues to cooperate with investigators, she said Tuesday. "In this case, ChatGPT provided factual responses to questions with information that could be found broadly across public sources on the internet, and it did not encourage or promote illegal or harmful activity," Waters said in an email.

Uthmeier conceded that his office was venturing into "uncharted territory" by launching a criminal probe into whether a chatbot contributed to the commission of a crime. His office also has initiated a civil probe, he said.

Several civil lawsuits have sought damages from AI and tech companies over the influence of chatbots and social media on loved ones' mental health. Last month, a jury in Los Angeles found both Meta and YouTube liable for harms to children using their services. In New Mexico, a jury determined that Meta knowingly harmed children's mental health. Also last month, a man sued Google for the wrongful death by suicide of his son and product liability claims, the latest in a growing number of legal challenges against AI developers that have drawn attention to the mental health dangers of chatbot companionship. AI

In a boost to Democrats, Virginia voters okay redistricting plan

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

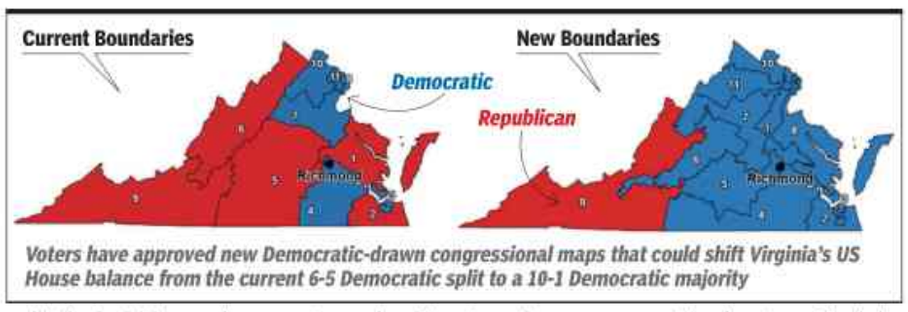
Washington: While India is in the throes of a delimitation debate that is pitting mostly southern states against some northern states, the United States has plunged into a redistricting rumble that is defining the Republican red v Democrat blue divide even more starkly.

Voters in Virginia on Tuesday narrowly approved a high-stakes referendum that essentially gives the Democratic-controlled state legislature power to redraw the state's congressional maps, turning a 6-5 edge Democrats had into a 10-1 dominance. This follows Republican efforts to do the same in Texas, which in turn was countered by Democrats in California.

To understand why everyone, including President Trump, in the midst of the Iran debacle, is flipping out over the Virginia outcome (which could result in Republicans losing the House of Representatives in Nov), one must look back to year 1812 and a man named Elbridge Gerry, the governor of Massachusetts.

Gerry engineered the dark political art (or science) of "packing and cracking" a district (constituency in Indian parlance) in such a way that voters opposed to him were consigned to one or two redrawn sacrificial districts so that their surplus votes are wasted, while packing supporters into districts he could win easily. By clustering opposition voters into a few districts ("packing") or spreading them thin across many ("cracking"), he could tilt the electoral field without changing a single vote.

The district Gerry conjured up was so twisted and jagged it looked like a salamander. An illustrator added wings and claws to the map and thus was born the term gerrymandering—the fine art of drawing electoral boundaries so artfully that politicians end up choosing their voters, rather than the other way around. In simple terms, imagine if a cricket captain could redraw the boundary ropes midmatch to suit the team's batting or bowling strengths.



Voters have approved new Democratic-drawn congressional maps that could shift Virginia's US House balance from the current 6-5 Democratic split to a 10-1 Democratic majority

This latest bout of map-making madness was triggered by an "arms race" that President Trump himself ignited. Last year, at Trump's urging, Texas Republicans aggressively redrew their maps to shore up GOP seats. Democrats quickly realised that bringing a bouquet to a knife fight was a losing strategy. In California, a blue state, they worked to sharpen the Democratic advantage. Virginia, its 11 districts leaning Democrat 6-5, followed suit, turning the state into a 10-1 dominance with some artful redrawing.

Trump, never one to stay away from a mudfight or suffer a setback in silence, spent the eve of the vote pleading with Virginians to "just vote no" (amid the Iran crisis). When the "Yes" votes triumphed by a narrow 3%, his reaction was predictably scorched-earth, as he lashed out at Democrats, wind farms, the Supreme Court when he was not raging about Iran.

The reason: Implications of the Virginia redrawing is seismic for the Nov midterms. The Republican majority in the US House of Representatives is currently a narrow 217-214. By gaining four seats in Virginia (10-1, instead of 6-5) and offsetting GOP gains in Texas, Democrats are suddenly within striking distance of winning the House.

For the Trump Presidency, losing the House would be more than a "setback"—it would be a legislative nightmare. A Democrat-majority House means Congressional inquiries, subpoenas, hearings, blocked budgets... and a lame duck Presidency.

DAILY PLANET

AFP

Grey seals are caught resting on a sandy islet in the Baltic Sea

UK lawmakers approve lifetime smoking ban for today's under-18s

Children in Britain who are 17 or younger, and anyone born in the future, will never be able to legally buy cigarettes after lawmakers approved new stricter restrictions on smoking. The Tobacco and Vapes Bill raises the legal age for buying tobacco by one year, every year, starting with people born on or after Jan 1, 2009, meaning affected age groups face a lifetime ban. The law, which is due to receive royal assent next week, also tightens controls on vaping, including banning sales of vaping and nicotine products to under-18s and restricting advertising, displays, free distribution and discounting. The govt says the measures will help reduce smoking and prevent young people from becoming addicted to nicotine, easing long-term pressure on the National Health Service.

South Korean fighter pilot fined for mid-air photos that caused crash: A South Korean fighter pilot has been ordered to pay 88 million won ($59,200) in damages over a 2021 mid-air collision he caused by trying to get photos and videos of himself flying, an official report said on Wednesday. The pilot, whose identity was withheld, wanted to capture footage of his last sortie before reassignment, according to the report by the board of audit and inspection. While travelling at 578km per hour, he had the pilot of a second plane and another colleague take snaps of him on their phones. In search of the perfect shot, he flipped his jet and flew close to the other aircraft, resulting in a misjudgement that caused his left stabilator — a horizontal stabiliser on a plane's tail — to collide with its wing. There were no casualties, but the move caused 878 million won in damages. The pilot's manoeuvre caused the aircraft to "invert up to 137° so that its upper side could be captured on video", the report said.

TODAY'S FACE-OFF
MI vs CSK
TV TIME 7:30 PM
STAR SPORTS / JIOHOTSTAR

PLAYED 39
Won by MI 21 (53.84%)
Won by CSK 18 (46.16%)

LAST FIVE MATCHES
MI W L L L L
CSK L W W L L
VENUE: MUMBAI
ODDS
MI 5/10 | CSK 6/4

IPL 2026

"EVEN IF PAT CUMMINS COMES BACK, ISHAN KISHAN SHOULD CONTINUE LEADING SUNRISERS HYDERABAD. HAVING AN INDIAN CAPTAIN BRINGS IN A DEGREE OF CONSISTENCY. YOU CAN'T BE SURE HOW FIT CUMMINS WILL BE FOR THE REST OF THE SEASON, GIVEN HIS NIGGLES."
—Sanjay Bangar | Ex-India batting coach

Royals pacers blow LSG away

Archer, Burger's Fiery Spells Help Team Prevail By 40 Runs

Fazal Khan | TNN

Lucknow: Jofra Archer (3/20 off four overs) and Nandre Burger produced exceptional spells of incisive fast bowling to help Rajasthan Royals win by 40 runs while defending 159/6 against Lucknow Super Giants here on Wednesday. The duo bowled with aggression, generating disconcerting pace and movement off the pitch to trump the efforts of LSG pacers Mohammed Shami, Mohsin Khan and Prince Yadav.

Burger finished with figures of 2/27, which included the wickets of LSG skipper Rishabh Pant and Mitchell Marsh. Once Ayush Badoni was run out for naught in the first over, Archer and Burger turned on the heat. Archer dismissed Aiden Markram with extra pace as the batter top-edged a pull shot straight to wicket-keeper Dhruv Jurel. Minutes earlier, Pant had fallen for a duck, trying to slog Burger out of the ground. The left-arm pacer then accounted for Marsh, who was threatening to take the game away with a fighting 55 off 41 balls. The home team folded for a paltry 119.

Once Marsh was dismissed, the LSG tail was wiped out in no time.

While the Royals pacers made the maximum use of the uncharacteristically lively pitch, Ravindra Jadeja's mature, unbeaten knock of 43 off 29 gave the bowlers a decent total to defend after the top order was blown away by the LSG pacers. Royals moved up to No. 2 in the points table while LSG's campaign nosedived as they remained at No. 9.

7 Lucknow Super Giants have lost seven successive IPL matches at home for the first time between Apr 14, 2025 and Apr 22, 2026.

Earlier, Shami delivered a couple of beauties while Mohsin Khan snuffed out teen sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi as LSG's all-India bowling unit derailed Rajasthan Royals. This is the third time in three games that Royals' top order imploded.

The experience and class of Shami (2/30 in 4 overs) stood apart while the lanky Mohsin (2/17 in 4 overs) was extremely disciplined, getting the ball to rear up and seam at the same time from awkward lengths.

However, in the closing stages, Jadeja and impact substitute Shubham Dubey provided Rajasthan Royals with much-needed acceleration with an unbeaten 49-run partnership off 25 balls.

Shami, however, was a sight to see. After Yashasvi Jaiswal struck him for three consecutive boundaries, the veteran pacer responded brilliantly in his next over, dismissing the batter for 22 with a sharp bouncer and then removing Dhruv Jurel for a golden duck off the very next ball with a fine outswinger.

Sunil Kumar

BREAKTHROUGH: Rajasthan's Nandre Burger celebrates after taking an LSG wicket on Wednesday

SCOREBOARD

RR: Y Jaiswal c Pant b Shami 22, V Sooryavanshi c Rathi b Mohsin 8, D Jurel c Pant b Shami 0, R Parag c Pooran b Prince 20, S Hetmyer c Prince b Mohsin 22, R Jadeja not out 43, D Ferreira c Mohsin b Prince 20, S Dubey not out 19; **Extras (lb1, w4): 5; Total (6 wkts, 20 ovrs): 159; FoW:** 1-32, 2-32, 3-32, 4-62, 5-77, 6-110; **Bowling:** Shami 4-0-30-2, Prince 4-0-29-2, Mohsin 4-1-17-2, Mayank 4-0-56-0, Rathi 4-0-26-0.

LSG: M Marsh c Parag b Burger 55, A Badoni run out Ravi 0, R Pant c Jurel b Burger 0, A Markram c Jurel b Archer 0, N Pooran c Ferreira b Jadeja 22, H Singh b Bishnoi 15, M Choudhary c Parag b Brijesh 7, M Shami b Brijesh 6, M Yadav c Jurel b Archer 5, D Rathi not out 2, M Khan b Archer 0; **Extras (lb2, w5): 7; Total (18 ovrs): 119; FoW:** 1-9, 2-10, 3-11, 4-54, 5-91, 6-105, 7-111, 8-113, 9-119, 10-119; **Bowling:** Archer 4-1-20-3, Burger 4-0-27-2, Brijesh 3-0-18-2, Jadeja 4-0-29-1, Bishnoi 3-0-23-1.

Result: RR won by 40 runs

HOW THEY STAND

TEAM	M	W	L	NR	NRR	P
PBKS	6	5	0	1	1.420	11
RR	7	5	2	0	0.790	10
RCB	6	4	2	0	1.171	8
SRH	7	4	3	0	0.820	8
DC	6	3	3	0	-0.130	6
GT	6	3	3	0	-0.821	6
MI	6	2	4	0	0.067	4
CSK	6	2	4	0	-0.780	4
LSG	7	2	5	0	-1.277	4
KKR	7	1	5	1	-0.879	3

TIME TO ASK APOLLO +AI
SILENT WORKER
Your liver works 24/7, performing 500+ tasks. Don't let it work overtime.
Scan to improve Liver health
For any Health Query Chat with Ask Apollo +AI
Apollo AI: Clinical excellence for healthier India

BCCI pushes for Bumrah to play entire WTC cycle

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New Delhi: As the dust settles on India's T20 World Cup triumph, BCCI's national selectors, in conjunction with the team management, have started charting plans for the World Test Championship (WTC) and the 2027 ODI World Cup. At the centre of the plans is the vexing issue of how to manage superstar pacer Jasprit Bumrah's workload. The BCCI, TOI understands, wants Bumrah — whose unique action puts extra stress on his 32-year-old body, putting his workload under scanner — to play all nine WTC Tests in the coming season.

India play a one-off Test against Afghanistan in Chandigarh from June 6 but that is not a part of the WTC cycle. India are due to play two Tests each in Sri Lanka and New Zealand this year before Australia come for a five-match Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Jan next year. Sources told TOI that reviving India's chances in the current WTC cycle will be the priority this year even as the buzz is about the ODI World Cup. India are currently placed at No. 6 in the WTC table.

"The attempt is to keep Bumrah fit enough to play all Tests. He is expected to play the four Tests in Sri Lanka and New Zealand. The challenge will be to keep him fresh for the five Tests at home against Australia. The selectors won't mind resting him for some ODI series. He played T20 cricket after a gap of two years in the Asia Cup last Sept and still delivered," BCCI sources told **TOI**.

Last year, Bumrah had made himself available for three of the five Tests in England. However, the board now wants him to play if he is clinically fit. Bumrah played all four Tests at home after that series. He is expected to play a negligible number of T20Is since the next marquee T20I assignment is two years away.

Bumrah will be a key figure in Indian conditions if India are to qualify for the WTC final. India have failed to qualify since Gautam Gambhir took over as head coach. The team has also been whitewashed by New Zealand and South Africa at home. The selectors have communicated that it's imperative that first-choice Test players be available for Test cricket if they are fit.

FOCUS ON PADIKKAL, JUREL

TOI understands that Devdutt Padikkal, Dhruv Jurel and Ruturaj Gaikwad are seen as middle order prospects. The team management feels Jurel can be used as a pure batter while Padikkal is seen as someone who can challenge Sai Sudharsan's place at No. 3.

BUMRAH'S BOWLING IN WTC 2023-25

	T	Wkts	Ave	BBI	BBM	SR	ER
Overall	15	77	15.1	6/45	9/91	30.6	2.9
In wins	7	40	13.7	6/45	9/91	27	3

1 Among bowlers with 50 wickets or more in WTC 2023-25, Jasprit Bumrah's average, economy rate and strike rate were the best

WEATHER

32°C

2 hundreds have been recorded in matches between MI vs CSK — 114* off 48 balls by Sanath Jayasuriya on May 14, 2008 and 105* off 63 balls by Rohit Sharma on April 14, 2024, both at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.

88 Ruturaj Gaikwad's unbeaten knock off 58 balls in Dubai on Sept 19, 2021, the highest individual innings for CSK against MI in the IPL.

Hardik, Gaikwad feel the heat as MI take on CSK

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Mumbai: Captaining five-time champions Mumbai Indians and Chennai Super Kings is never a straightforward task. The challenge becomes even more daunting when the men in charge are asked to fill the towering shoes of Rohit Sharma and MS Dhoni, figures who enjoy near-mythical status at their respective franchises. MI skipper Hardik Pandya and CSK captain Ruturaj Gaikwad are discovering first-hand how heavy that burden can be.

As the IPL heavyweights prepare to lock horns at the Wankhede Stadium on Thursday, the spotlight will not only be on two sides desperate to resurrect faltering campaigns but also on captains struggling to find form while navigating the pressures of leadership.

Both Pandya and Gaikwad entered the 19th edition of the IPL with impressive credentials. Pandya had a stellar 2025, scoring 217 runs and claiming nine wickets, playing a pivotal role in India's triumph at the 2026 T20 World Cup. Gaikwad, meanwhile, enjoyed a solid domestic season for Maharashtra before marking his return to the Indian ODI side with a century against South Africa in Dec 2025. However, the transition from individual success to leading high-profile IPL franchises has been anything but smooth.

Pandya's struggles have been particularly stark. The 32-year-old has managed just 96 runs in five matches this season, with his declining effectiveness in the death overs becoming increasingly evident. His last two innings, a laboured 14 off 12 balls against Punjab Kings and a scratchy 15 off 16 deliveries versus Gujarat Titans, have underlined his inability to dominate opposition bowling attacks when it matters most.

With the ball too, Pandya has not been potent. He has taken only three wickets while conceding runs at an economy rate of 11.69, a worrying spike from his career average of 9.29.

Rohit and Dhoni have a hit

The availability of Rohit Sharma and MS Dhoni for Thursday's clash remains uncertain, with both players subject to fitness assessments by their respective medical teams.

"MS, we will know today. That decision will be made once the medical staff is completely satisfied that he is ready to go," CSK bowling consultant Eric Simons said on Wednesday. Both, though, had a hit in the nets on match eve.

From square to straight: Abhishek redraws the map

The SRH Opener's Unbeaten 135 Against Delhi Capitals Was An Innings Built On A Subtle Shift In Geometry, Balance & Intent

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Till Tuesday night at Uppal, Abhishek Sharma had begun to look a touch too readable. The talent was never in doubt and neither was the intent, but bowlers had started to guide him into a familiar pattern. Deep midwicket and deep cover were two coordinates of concern in recent times, fields set not just to contain him but to expose a familiar pattern.

They dragged Abhishek wider, lured him into the square hit and waited with protection in place. For Abhishek, the violence was still there but the options seemed to be shrinking. For a batter who thrives on instinct, that narrowing of the map had begun to matter.

Against Delhi Capitals, Sharma did not merely snap a lean stretch. He redrew the field. His 135* off 68 balls, with 10 fours and 10 sixes, powered Sunrisers Hyderabad to 242/2 and set up a 47-run win. It was also the ninth T20 hundred of his career. But the significance of the innings lay beyond volume — it was a smart adjustment.

Sharma looked less rushed, less eager to manufacture and more willing to let the ball arrive on his terms. Beneath the flourish lay fine recalibrations.

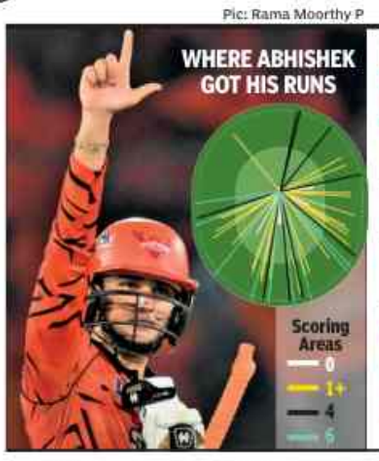
That change was most visible in his scoring arc. The arc that once stretched across the horizontal now narrowed and surged straight. Seventy-one runs flowed down the ground through long-on and long-off. A corridor he had long neglected was now reclaimed with authority. The old temptation was to keep forcing the game square, especially through cover and point. Here, the bat path looked cleaner and the intent straighter. The off drive fetched him 34 runs.

His footwork, still instinctive and balletic, found a new grammar. Previously, he stepped away recklessly to force the square hit. Sharma now moved into the ball, momentum forward, closing angles, and meeting it on his terms.

"On a flat track, he is almost like Chris Gayle," former South Africa captain Faf du Plessis said.

The SRH opener exhibited a stable base, clean extension and a mind remapping the field in real time. In doing so, he dismantled Delhi's plans with disarming ease.

Pic: Rama Moorthy P



HIGHEST INDIVIDUAL INNINGS IN THE IPL

Runs	Balls	SR	Batter	For	Opponent	Venue	Date
175*	66	265.1	Chris Gayle	RCB	Warriors	Bengaluru	23 April 2013
158*	73	216.4	Brendon McCullum	KKR	RCB	Bengaluru	18 April 2008
141	55	256.4	Abhishek Sharma	SRH	PBKS	Hyderabad	12 April 2025
140*	70	200	Quinton de Kock	LSG	KKR	Mumbai	18 May 2022
135*	68	198.5	**Abhishek Sharma**	SRH	DC	Hyderabad	21 April 2026

Stats: Rajesh Kumar

'You can't be the No. 1 T20 batter without being mature'

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Hyderabad: Sunrisers Hyderabad are on a roll, winning three matches on the bounce to surge to No.3 in the table. Abhishek Sharma's calculated attack at the top has come in handy. The southpaw, who struggled during the T20 World Cup, scoring 141 runs with two fifties, had a tough start in this edition of IPL too, with scores of 7, 48, 0, 74 and 0 in the first five matches.

He also failed to trouble the scorers in the first two home matches, going hard at the bowlers. Attacking from get-go has produced mixed results. However, in the last two innings, Abhishek showed a different aspect of his batting. He first chose to assess the conditions before going berserk. He scored one run off the first three balls against Matthew Short of CSK and raced to his fastest half-century (15b) in the previous match. And on Tuesday, he played out Mukesh Kumar and Nitish Rana in the first two overs. His first boundary came off the fifth ball.

SRH pace bowling coach Varun Aaron attributed it to the growing maturity of the 25-year-old.

"He's always had that maturity and that's been there over the last couple of years. You can't be the No. 1 T20 batsman in the world without being mature. Obviously, he's somebody who sees the opposition, sees the surface and decides to play a certain way. Today, it wasn't the surface where you could just go hell for leather every single ball. So, you have to respect the opponent, respect the surface and he did exactly that. He's shown glimpses of this in the past," Aaron said, adding, "When you play a high risk, high reward kind of a game, sometimes it doesn't work out. And you have to give a player like Abhishek that leeway."

'Nikhat must win assessment test for place in CWG, Asiad squad'

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Indian women's boxing is going through an interesting churn — the rise of fearless young contenders with concerns over dip in form of seasoned stars Nikhat Zareen and Lovlina Borgohain. As the countdown to major events like the CWG and Asian Games gathers pace, head coach **Santiago Nieva** reflects on the team's mixed performances at the Asian Championships while expressing optimism about the depth of talent and long-term goals, including 2028 Olympics.

Excerpts from an interview...

● How do you assess India's overall performance at the recent Asian boxing meet?

India's overall performance was arguably the best since the men's and women's events were combined in 2019. The team secured a tally of 16 medals, including a record number of gold, particularly in Olympic weight divisions. Beyond the numbers, what stands out is the quality of performances and the calibre of opponents our boxers overcame.

● What were the positives and key areas of concern?

The consistency between what we observed in training and how our boxers delivered was a big positive. They replicated that level against strong opposition. This shows that we are competing and winning at the absolute highest level. Another encouraging aspect was the composure displayed in close bouts, where our boxers managed to stay calm under pressure and still secure results. At the same time, there are areas we need to improve.

We always aim higher — not everyone won gold and not every boxer performed at their peak. With the Olympics ahead, every nation will raise their level, so it's crucial that we progress faster and stay ahead of the competition.

● Young talent Priya Ghanghas winning gold in an Olympic category (60kg) is a big boost...

On paper, Priya may not have been the favourite to win, but she proved otherwise with her performances in the ring. We were already aware of her potential from what she has shown in India, as well as during her exposure in Spain. The way she handled and defeated seasoned, high-quality opponents was particularly impressive.

● How do you analyse the early exits of Nikhat and Lovlina?

I would say Nikhat largely delivered what would be expected from a neutral standpoint. We remain confident that she has the ability and qualities to turn the tables in a future encounter against Wu Yu (China's reigning Olympic champion). Lovlina's turned out to be a difficult bout against a strong opponent (Uzbekistan's Aziza Zokirova), where a few technical mistakes came into play areas we will need to work on.

● How would both boxers fit into your long-term plans?

Both Nikhat and Lovlina are clear priority athletes and strong medal contenders in any competition they enter. One key difference, however, lies in their current competitive landscape domestically. Nikhat is part of a very strong weight category in India, where she faces stiff internal competition and will need to consistently outperform other top boxers to secure her spot in major events.

Nikhat will have to come through a highly competitive assessment process, especially with selections for events like the CWG and Asian Games in mind. Lovlina has been outstanding in her weight category domestically. While that can always change, at this point it allows her to focus more on preparing for international competition.

● With the CWG and Asian Games coming up, what are the more immediate priorities for the team?

At the moment, we have two groups within the team — those who have already secured their spots for the CWG, and those who will undergo another round of assessment scheduled for mid-May. Beyond that, the plan is to have at least one international preparatory competition ahead of the CWG.

Malinga, Hussain add new dimension to SRH

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Hyderabad: Sunrisers Hyderabad's bowling looked thin and with Pat Cummins ruled out for the initial part of IPL, it proved to be their weak link as three defeats in the first four games showed.

However, Praful Hinge and Sakib Hussain along with **Eshan Malinga**, currently second in the bowling charts with 12 wickets, added a new dimension to the attack.

Sunrisers' pace bowling coach Varun Aaron said that research done ahead of the auction helped them assemble a unit that can deliver irrespective of the pitch conditions. "Malinga (4/32) has a brilliant slow ball and can bowl 140-plus. And with Sakib, that slow ball is brilliant. He is getting as much turn as an off-spinner on the slow ball. With the same arm speed, he executes his yorkers. With the way IPL is going, you need pace variance. This year, one of our plan was to have bowlers who can offer something to the captain irrespective of the surface. If you talk about Sakib and Malinga, they almost remove the surface from the equation with their skills," he explained.

He also hinted that Malinga may take the new ball. "Malinga has so much potential. He can be a very good new ball bowler. He hasn't taken the new ball yet for us, but I think in the future, you would see him taking the new ball because that's one level he hasn't unlocked yet in this game," he added.

Aaron also reckoned that Hussain has worked very hard. "I've seen Sakib for two years. He always had the pace, very quick arm action, very awkward. Obviously, he didn't have access to getting coached long-term. But he's put in a lot of work. Right from when the World Cup started, we've had camps for him specifically. He's flown down to Mumbai, then we called him to Chennai. He has that will, he has that hunger."

Three first-class players suspended

Cricket Association of Pondicherry (CAP) has suspended three of its first-class cricketers with immediate effect on allegations that they assaulted U-19 state team coach Venkataraman on Dec 8 last year, the state body announced on Wednesday. The three players -- J Karthikeyan, A Aravindaraj and S Santhosh Kumaran -- have all represented Puducherry across Ranji Trophy, Vijay Hazare Trophy and Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy in recent years.

Lankan govt tells cricket board to quit: Sri Lanka's govt has urged the national cricket board's executive committee to make way for a new administration, a board official told AFP on Wednesday. Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) has been plagued by allegations of corruption and mismanagement. "There will be an interim administration headed by a former investment banker," the official said, asking not to be named. AGENCIES

RCB All-Rounder Venkatesh Iyer Embraces Team-First Approach, Stays Ready While Chasing Red-Ball Growth

PATIENT, PREPARED, PROFESSIONAL

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Bengaluru: Behind the calm, composed exterior of Venkatesh Iyer lies a cricketer clear in thought, confident in his craft and unwavering in his team-first approach.

Over five seasons, Iyer featured in 62 matches for Kolkata Knight Riders before being released and picked up by Royal Challengers Bengaluru at the mini-auction for Rs 7 crore —Rs 16.75 crore less than his previous price. The move has also brought a shift in role. From being a regular at KKR, the all-rounder has featured in just one game in RCB's first six matches of the season, spending most of his time on the sidelines.

IYER UNPLUGGED

While it is an unfamiliar situation, Iyer has taken it in his stride.

"It definitely plays on the mind. I'm not used to sitting out, but that's okay. This is a professional sport. As someone who places the team above everything else, it's my duty to adhere to the environment," Iyer said during a select media interaction here on Wednesday.

He attributes his limited opportunities to a settled combination: "We're defending champions. So to tinker with a combination that has won you a championship is not always the smartest move. So as someone who's walked into a team, it's my duty to first understand the dynamics of the team and to know what role I can play," the southpaw added.

The transition, according to Iyer, has been made easy by the clarity offered by the coaching staff.

NEW TERRITORY: Venkatesh Iyer has featured in just one game for RCB

IYER IN IPL
- **Teams:** Kolkata Knight Riders - 2021-2025; Royal Challengers Bengaluru 2026
- Matches: **63**
- Runs: **1497**
- HS: **104**
- SR: **138.10**
- 100:**1**
- 50: **12**

"Credit for that has to go to Mo [Bobat], Andy [Flower], and DK [Dinesh Karthik]. They've been amazing when it comes to conversations about what my role in the team is. They've given me absolute clarity. And sitting outside does not mean that I'm not a part of their plans. It's definitely a matter of when rather than if," the 31-year-old said.

Staying mentally ready, however, is the real challenge.

"To be honest, it's hard. It's something that you can't prepare for. But I'm a practical person, I know how things work. When I look at the team, I know that there's a realistic chance that I can be benched. It's extremely important to stay motivated, as you can easily become desperate. You can easily lose out on your work ethic," he stated.

"I train my mind in such a way that I'm going to play every game," Iyer added.

THE KKR CONNECT

KKR letting go of him, Iyer admitted to being hurt, but team dynamics, he believes, was the reason for it.

"I did feel bad, but there was amazing communication between Abhishek Nayar (then KKR coach) and me. He wanted to release me and told me what the team requires, and you can get anything done out of me if it's good for the team," Iyer said.

THE RED BALL ROMANTIC

Amid the glitz of the IPL, one item Iyer ensures is always in his kit bag is a red ball. The medium pacer has featured in 34 first-class matches, bowling over 220 overs and picking up 20 wickets, but believes there is more to offer in the longer format.

Iyer, who was not a part of the Madhya Pradesh team when they last won the Ranji Trophy in the 2021-22 season, is keen to improve his red-ball skills.

"One thing that I really feel that I haven't tapped into, and I have the ability to do, is my red ball bowling. I believe that I can contribute extensively with my red ball. So I make it a point, whichever team I go to, I try to identify someone who has played a lot of red ball cricket. Last year, I had Mitchell Starc (in KKR) . This year, I have Josh Hazlewood. My conversations with them are about how I can improve my red ball bowling."

With the Impact Player rule limiting his bowling opportunities in the IPL, Iyer has made peace with his role.

"I know I won't be bowling four overs. If I get two overs, it's going to be a lucky day for me," he admitted.

But it's the red cherry that he wants to prove himself with, and that desire is tied to a team dream.

"I have conversations with Hazlewood as to how to improve my red ball bowling because I want to go back home and win the Ranji Trophy for Madhya Pradesh once again. I know that I can do it with the ball in hand. So every year I turn up [for the IPL], I have a red ball in my kit bag. I make it a point that I take a couple of sessions of fast bowling with a Test legend."

For now, Iyer continues to wait, watch and work for the moment his opportunity arrives.

Scenic B'luru course to challenge elite runners

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: A selection of the world's top distance runners will race early Sunday morning to beat the heat and post their best time at the TCS World 10K. The elite women will be flagged off before sunrise at 5.30am, followed by the elite men's race at 6.08am from Cubbon Road.

The Open 10K runners, who total 22,189, will have staggered starts based on their running times. There are more serious runners than those who race for fun, as the Majja run will have 12,171 competitors in action.

Race Director Hugh Jones, who went around the course,

WORLD 10K

called it a scenic course that is in better shape. "The first thing that hit me was the weather," said Jones, who arrived here from London, where the temperature is hovering between 7 and 16 degree Celsius. "This year more than the course, it's going to be the weather that is going to determine the performance of the top athletes," he added.

This year's course will see the athletes go around Ulsoor Lake before they hit the 4K mark. It also meant removing two U-turns from the athletes' navigation. "It will help them maintain the rhythm. It's psychologically better for the runners. Overall, it's a more fluid and scenic route this year, which should enhance the experience for all participants," said Jones, who won the 1982 London Marathon, clocking 2 hours, 09.24 seconds.

ON YOUR MARK

RACE CATEGORY	Start Time	Finish Time	Pre-Holding Area	Entry From
World 10K Women	5.30 am	6.10 am	Outside Army Public School, Kamaraj Road	Kamaraj Road
World 10K Men	6.08 am	6.43 am	Outside Army Public School, Kamaraj Road	Kamaraj Road
Open 10K	6.10 am	8.45 am	RSAOI cricket ground	RSAOI Gate No.4, MG Road
CWD & Sr Citizen Run	8:00 am	9:00 am	FM Sam Manekshaw Parade Ground, Kamaraj Road	Gate No. 7, Kamaraj Road
Majja Run	8.30 am	10:00 am	RSAOI cricket ground	RSAOI Gate No.4, MG Road

ELABORATE MEDICAL ARRANGEMENTS

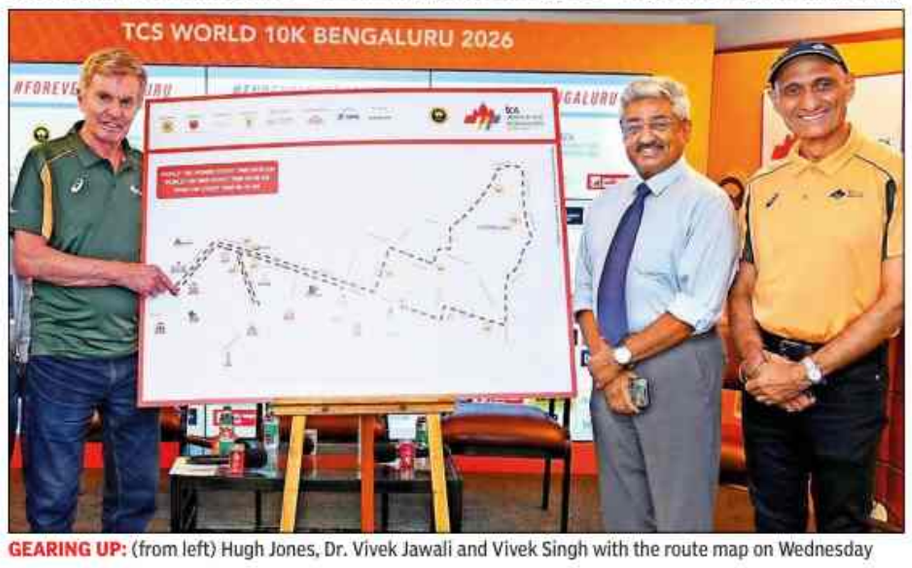
With more than 36,723 runners set to hit the course in different categories, including 1559, entering the Senior Citizens Run, the organisers have made elaborate medical arrangements.

"All those who are running should screen themselves. And to ensure quick response, we have further strengthened our medical preparedness across the board," Vivek Jawali, medical director of the race, told reporters here on Wednesday. "A 30-bed medical facility with ICU support will be set up at the venue, supported by multiple medical stations along the route, ambulances, medics (10 of them) on bikes with defibrillators, and a dedicated command centre," he added.

"Bengaluru today stands as the running capital of India, and that is a result of the collective support of so many stakeholders coming together. We are excited for race day," Vivek Singh, Joint MD, Procam International, said.

EXPO FROM TODAY

The Get Active Expo will begin at the St. Joseph's Indian High School (CBSE), on Vittal Mallya Road on Thursday. It will serve as a hub for runners and fitness enthusiasts until April 25. The Expo will be open from 10 am to 7 pm on the first two days and till 5 pm on Saturday.



GEARING UP: (from left) Hugh Jones, Dr. Vivek Jawali and Vivek Singh with the route map on Wednesday

Muthu stars for B'lore United

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Muthu Kumar's brace helped Bangalore United Hockey Club get past HMT Sports Club 3-1 in the KSHA 'A' Division Hockey League Championship here on Wednesday.

Rohit opened the scoring for HMT in the eighth minute, but after that, they couldn't get back on the scoresheet. In the first half, the HMT players attempted various long balls into the opposition area but only ended up giving possession.

The score was tied at 1-1 moving into the last minute of the first half, when Muthu scored from a penalty corner to give United the lead.

HOCKEY

Coming into the second half, United were determined to maintain, and, moreover, increase, their lead, and kept their attacks going. A series of missed chances and poor passing by the HMT players allowed United to dominate possession, which eventually helped them convert into three goals.

The HMT players failed to control the game or make interceptions to break the flow of the attacks, which left them stranded in their own half for most of the period.

Result: Bangalore United HC 3 (Sunil Kiran 25, Muthu Kumar 30, 36) bt HMT SC 1 (Rohit 8). **Semifinals:** April 24: Guru HC vs Bangalore United HC (1.15 pm); Blue Star HC vs Bombers HC (2.45 pm).

—Kaushal Kumar V

EALA SAILS INTO SECOND ROUND

Filipina star Alexandra Eala enjoyed a strong start to her Madrid Open campaign on Wednesday, moving past Russian qualifier Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova 6-3, 6-3 to reach the second round at the event for the third straight year.

TENNIS

The 44th-ranked lefty needed one hour and 31 minutes to dismiss Pavlyuchenkova, who was a semifinalist in the Spanish capital in 2021.

The 20-year-old booked a clash with 19th seed Elise Mertens.

Earlier, Venus Williams was knocked out in the first round on Tuesday as the 45-year-old went down in straight sets to Kaitlin Quevedo. The 20-year-old Spanish wild card beat the seven-time Grand Slam champion 6-2, 6-4.

In ATP action at the Caja Magica, Matteo Berrettini crashed out to qualifier Dino Prizmic 6-3, 6-4. Prizmic will next take on American fourth seed Ben Shelton. AFP

SNAP SHOTS

Binu fires 9-under

Young Shaurya Binu continued his fine run, carding a brilliant nine-under 64 to move atop the leaderboard after two rounds at the Invitational Congo in Lubumbashi. The 21-year-old moved to 10-under after 36 holes, giving him a two-shot lead. The pack behind him includes first-round co-leaders Mannat Brar (67-71) and Tushar Pannu (67-71), Udayan Mane (70-68) and Aryan Roopa Anand (71-67).

Akshay & Dhruv share lead: Akshay Sharma of Chandigarh and Gurugram's Dhruv Sheoran shared the 36-hole lead at nine-under 135 after round two of the Players Championship in Nuh, Haryana on Wednesday. Akshay (70-65) produced a seven-under 65 to climb from tied 14th into a share of the lead. Dhruv (69-66) returned a six-under 66.

India drawn with B'desh, Maldives: The Indian women's football team was drawn alongside Bangladesh and the Maldives in Group B of the SAFF Women's Championship to be held in Margao from May 25 to June 6. Group A features Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan. The top two teams from each group will advance to the semi-finals, according to the draw conducted in Dhaka on Wednesday.

Gandharv enters semis: Gandharv G stormed into the men's singles semifinals of the AITA Tennis Tournament conducted in Bengaluru on Wednesday. Gandharv defeated Soma Suhas 7-5, 6-1. In the women's singles, Shreeniti C of Karnataka beat Meghana GD 2-6, 6-1, 6-1 to enter the semifinals.

Results: Men: Vishal V bt Prakaash 7-6 (9), 6-4; Gandharv G bt Soma Suhas 7-5, 6-1; SM Adithya bt Manish Ganesh 6-1, 6-4; Deepak A bt Sandilya 6-0, 4-6, 6-2. **Women:** Hridayeshi P bt Ananya J 6-1, 4-6, 7-6 (4); Saiyette V bt Nidi S 6-3, 6-3; Sonicka J bt Ananya SR 6-4, 6-3; Shreeniti C bt Meghana GD 2-6, 6-1, 6-1.

'Open' strategy in future plans

International Series Eager To Integrate National Open In Its Fold; 11 Indians To Tee Off At Singapore Open

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Singapore: "All systems cool," reassured Rahul Singh, with speculation on the long-term future of LIV Golf still raging. The head of the International Series at LIV tried to douse the blaze and promised firepower "in every single country that we're going to," including the second edition of IS India to be hosted by Prestige Golfshire in Bengaluru in October.

Will it be the second coming of Bryson DeChambeau? "Anirban (Lahiri) will be there," he confirmed. And may just bring a few friends. "There's no reason for us to feel anything but buoyant," he reiterated, on the sidelines of the $2 million Singapore Open.

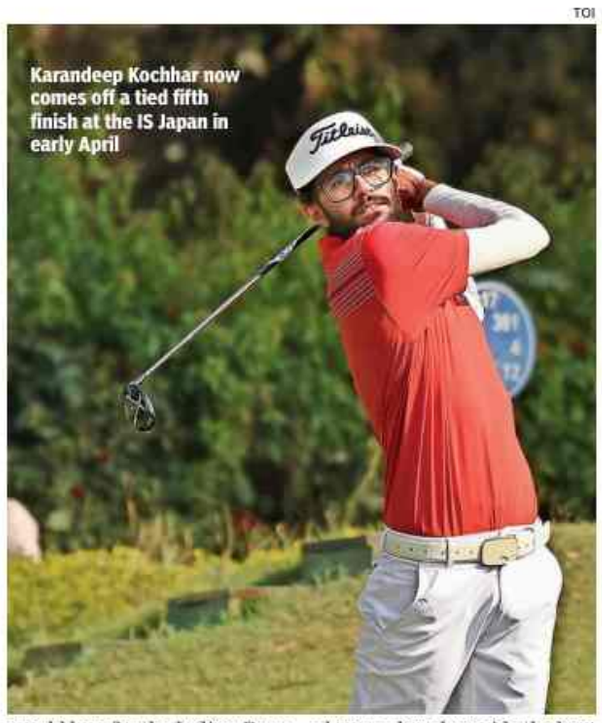
GOLF

"The National Open strategy is central to what LIV is trying to achieve and the International Series (co-sanctioned by Asian Tour) is going to drive that. That means absorbing the National Opens into the IS. We've seen that by bringing in the Hong Kong Open, Singapore Open, and now the Philippine Open into the fold of the Series."

Then, he made his swing.

Asked about the Indian Open, which is co-sanctioned by Indian Golf Union and DP World Tour, he said, "We would love for the Indian Open to become part of the series. We respect the fact that they're part of another tour, and they have to choose. The IGU will ultimately have to decide what route they want to take. If they speak with us, we welcome the conversations. At the same time, we want them to come to us."

He added, "What I will say is that I definitely hope that in the future the Indian Open is going to see the best Indian players play alongside the best global talent. And I think at the moment, that is something that it's not seen."



TOI

Karandeep Kochhar now comes off a tied fifth finish at the IS Japan in early April

Gaganjeet Bhullar, the last golfer to win on a top Tour (2023), was unable to secure a place amid an ongoing dispute between the official PGTI Tour and newbie IGPL.

As well as Karandeep Kochhar, who finished fourth at the Philippine Golf Championship this Feb, and now comes off a T5th finish at the IS Japan in early April. "To be honest, I think I'm okay with not playing. I feel like on the Asian Tour, we are given a lot of opportunities. Whatever I can control I want to focus on that," Karandeep struck a pragmatic tone. "Hopefully, there is a solution for at least the bigger events and for the greater good of Indian golf, we have the best players — Gaganjeet and SSP Chawrasia (the last Indian to win the National Open in 2016 and 2017) should be playing these events, forget about me."

For the record, there are seven IGPL players and four PGTI players attempting to crack the code at the Sentosa Golf Club, including Bhullar, SSP, Jeev Milkha Singh, and Shiv Kapur.

The picture-perfect Serapong course is framed by views of the cityscape, and the ships crossing the Singapore Straits — a different world from another part of Asia.

On display in the clubhouse alongside the tournament trophy, sits a symbol of golf's oldest tradition: the Claret Jug, ensconced in a glass box. The leading two players, if not already qualified, will earn places in The 154th Open at Royal Birkdale in July. It's a reminder of what all golfers aspire for, whatever their allegiance.

(The writer is in Singapore at the invitation of International Series)

'Engine rule tweaks right way to address purity of F1'

Rohan.Alvares@timesofindia.com

A step in the 'right direction'. That's how Williams driver Alex Albon summed up the engine rule tweaks to the 2026 F1 regulations, which have generated plenty of debate following the first three races of the season.

With the new hybrid power units introduced this season having an almost 50-50 split between electric and combustion power, drivers bemoaned that their skills were being blunted. There were also safety concerns raised after the nasty crash in last month's Japanese Grand Prix involving Haas driver Oliver Bearman.

However, an online meeting on Monday involving the FIA — the sport's governing body, team principals, CEOs of power unit manufacturers and F1 saw the approval of several changes intended to improve both the racing and driver safety aspects.

"Positive, definitely towards the right direction," Albon told a select group of reporters during an online call on Wednesday when asked about the changes, most of which will come into effect at the next race in Miami from May 1-3. "Is it going to fix everything? Likely not. But how much can we actually fix? I think we've gone the right way to address a lot of the purity of the sport. Actually, tomorrow (Thursday) I'm in a simulator to test the new regulations. So I'm hoping I'll have a nice, enjoyable time."

It's been anything but an enjoyable time so far for many of the drivers, left frustrated by the new rules. Most notable among the disgruntled bunch was four-time champion Max Verstappen, who said he was even contemplating his future in F1 after finishing eighth in Suzuka. Albon elaborated on how, in his view, the essence of the sport had been diluted.

"Basically, when you think about karting, when you think about everything we've done until this year, to go faster, you just drive as fast as you can. It's as simple as that. This year, the game has changed, where there are many situations where, by driving slower, you can go faster.

"So it lacks the purity of the sport in many ways, in terms of, you want to know that when you do the lap as quickly as you can, it will be the fastest lap you can do. I know these new regulation changes will improve that. While I won't go into detail on how you can go faster by driving slower, but for the most part, I think maybe 80% of those techniques will go away," said the British-born Thai driver who finished eighth in the drivers' standings last season.

Asked about India's renewed push for a return to the F1 calendar, Albon welcomed the prospect. "I never got to drive the track when it was held there. It would be fantastic to have an Indian race," said the 30-year-old.

"I think the drivers enjoyed it back then. Maybe Fernando (Alonso) and Lewis (Hamilton) will have a bit of an advantage over everyone else, but I'll be excited to drive there."

MBAPPE , VINICIUS SCORE TO LIFT REAL OUT OF A FOUR-GAME SLUMP

Madrid: Kylian Mbappe and Vinicius Junior each scored as Real Madrid ended a four-game winless streak by defeating Alaves 2-1 on Tuesday to move closer to Spanish league leaders Barcelona. The victory at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium left Madrid six points behind Barcelona, who host sixth-placed Celta Vigo on Wednesday.

LA LIGA

It was Madrid's first game since they were eliminated by Bayern Munich in the Champions League. The team's last two Spanish league matches had been a 1-1 draw against Girona and a 2-1 loss at Mallorca. "We have six games left," Madrid coach Álvaro Arbeloa said. "The goal is to win all of them, regardless of what happens."

AL NASSR COULD PLAY CR7 JR ALONGSIDE DAD

Riyadh: Saudi Pro League giants Al Nassr are reportedly considering a move to promote Cristiano Ronaldo's son to the senior squad, potentially setting up a historic father-son pairing next season.

According to Al Weeam, as quoted by Goal.com, the 15-year-old has been making a strong impression in the club's youth system and is being lined up for a possible inclusion in the first-team setup ahead of the next campaign.

The teenager has already been part of several elite academies worldwide, before arriving in Saudi Arabia.

While Ronaldo continues to chase his historic 1,000 career strikes, having his son assist one or more of those goals would provide a fairy tale ending to an already storied career.

LEICESTER RELEGATED TO THIRD DIVISION

London: Former Premier League champion Leicester will be playing in the third tier of English football next season.

Leicester, who sealed the unlikeliest title win of the Premier League era in 2016 at odds of 5,000-1, needed a victory on Tuesday to maintain hope of avoiding relegation but drew 2-2 with Hull.

The midlands club, which also won the FA Cup in 2021 and played in England's top flight last season, is second to last in the second-tier Championship. Relegation comes after Leicester was docked six points in February for breaching the English Football League's financial rules when it earned promotion in the 2023-24 season. Earlier this month, it lost its bid to overturn that punishment, leaving it mired in the relegation zone. AGENCIES

ROSENOIR'S SHORT TENURE ENDS

Chelsea have sacked head coach Liam Rosenior after losing five consecutive Premier League matches without scoring for the first time since 1912. The London side are 7th in the Premier League. The Englishman lasted less than four months in the role since his appointment in Jan. Rosenior took charge following the departure of Enzo Maresca but with seven defeats in their last eight matches across all competitions and Champions League qualification on the line, the Chelsea hierarchy was prompted make a change...

Rosenior's time at Chelsea

16 Mitoma's goal for Brighton on Tuesday was the 16th set-piece goal conceded by Chelsea this Premier League season. Only West Ham and Bournemouth, with 17, have allowed more such goals.

11 Chelsea have conceded 11 goals from corners in the Premier League this season — their joint-most in a season (1994-95).

1912 Chelsa have lost five straight league games without scoring a goal for the first time since 1912.

6 Chelsea have lost five straight Premier League games only once before — a streak of six defeats in October-November 1993.

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Jadeja's all-round performance (43 off 29 balls & 1 wicket) hands LSG a fourth straight loss in IPL & lifts RR (159/6) to 2nd in standings, P 15

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A YEAR AFTER HER ARREST IN A GOLD SMUGGLING CASE, RANYA RAO WALKS OUT OF JAIL FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF ONE-YEAR DETENTION UNDER COFEPOSA ACT 4

US tourist raped at Kodagu homestay; cook arrested

Claims Drink Was Spiked; Owner Held For Cover-Up Bid

G Rajendra & Shrinivasa M | TNN

Madikeri/Bengaluru: A US national alleged she was raped at a homestay in Kodagu district's Kutta village last week, in an incident that has cast a shadow over the popular hill station.

▶ **Multiple loose ends in case, cops intensify probe, P 4**
▶ **Safety concerns may dent state tourism industry, P 4**

The survivor said she was served a drink spiked with intoxicants and then assaulted, adding that she could not seek help immediately as the property's Wi-Fi remained disconnected for three days.

A cook, identified as Brijeshkumar from Jharkhand, working at the homestay was arrested over rape charges, while his employer and homestay owner Vishal Ponnappa was held for allegedly trying to suppress the crime. Both were remanded in judicial custody till May 3.

A top police officer in Bengaluru said medical examination has confirmed rape.

In her complaint, the survivor, a Washington-based solo traveller, alleged she was raped after she slipped into a semi-conscious state upon consuming the spiked drink.

She had checked into the homestay on April 12 for her second visit, having stayed there the previous month as well. The survivor stayed at the property until April 15 before travelling to Mysuru, where she was admitted to a private hospital.

The incident surfaced after she contacted the US embassy in New Delhi on April 17. The information was passed on to the Indian govt, which alerted the Karnataka home department, leading to a case being registered on April 19.

"She was not comfortable reporting the incident immediately and approached the police only after leaving Kodagu," a police officer said.

▶ **Homestay licence, P 4**

FACILITY DISCONNECTED WI-FI FOR 3 DAYS: SURVIVOR

- **April 12 afternoon:** A US tourist checks into a homestay in Kutta, 78km from Madikeri. She **had visited the facility in March for a couple of days**
- **Evening:** Claims she slipped into **semi-conscious state after consuming a spiked drink** served to her at the homestay; sexually assaulted by cook
- **April 15:** Checks out, gets **admitted into a private hospital in Mysuru.** Approaches US embassy, which alerts the Centre

- **April 19:** Following directives from Centre and K'taka, **Kodagu cops arrest the homestay owner and its cook.** Remanded in judicial custody
- Survivor **claims homestay Wi-Fi switched off for 3 days,** preventing her from contacting anyone

> Cops acted on communication from the Union home ministry and arrested the accused. We will check whether the homestay has a licence and follows SOPs...
> **G Parameshwara** | K'TAKA HOME MINISTER

'Put democracy in peril': SC slams Mamata over 'interference' in ED raids

AmitAnand.Choudhary
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Supreme Court on Wednesday came down hard on West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee for interfering with Enforcement Directorate searches on Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC), the political consultancy hired by state govt and Trinamool Congress, and said that her action had put democracy in peril.

Justices Prashant Kumar Mishra and N V Anjaria rejected the efforts of the heavy-duty team of Banerjee's lawyers to frame the issue as that of Centre-State.

"This is not a dispute between the State and the Union. A chief minister of any State cannot walk in the midst of an investigation, put democracy in peril... don't convert this into a dispute between the State and the Union. This is per se an act committed by an individual who happens to be the chief minister keeping the whole democracy in jeopardy," the bench said.

> If the CM barges into an ED investigation, your idea of remedy for ED is to go to the state govt, which is headed by the CM, and inform them about it and seek remedy?
> **—SC, to senior advocate Kapil Sibal**

The tough remarks, on the eve of polling for Bengal Phase 1 polls, marks a setback for Banerjee, while giving BJP, her principal opponent, ammunition.

▶ **ED moved top court, P 7**

27L under scrutiny, 139 cleared to vote in Bengal Phase 1 assembly polls

Srishti Lakhotia, Debashis Konar & Kaushik Pradhan | TNN

Kolkata: SC-mandated tribunals have restored voting rights to 139 people — .005% of more than 27 lakh names struck off rolls in the first phase during judicial adjudication under special intensive revision (SIR) — on the eve of round one of Bengal assembly polls Thursday. SIR has cut Bengal's electorate from 7.6 crore to 6.8 crore.

▶ **FULL COVERAGE: PAGE 13**

Eight names earlier added by judicial officers were removed from supplementary rolls. Out of 34 lakh appeals overall, tribunals have disposed of just 147 so far. "All 139 can vote Thursday. Efforts are underway to ensure this," chief electoral officer Manoj Agarwal said. Those restored have been informed of booth details and returning officers.

▶ **Fresh enrolment, P 6**

386 SEATS IN TN, BENGAL VOTE TODAY

	West Bengal (Ph 1)	Tamil Nadu
Polling Stations	44,378	75,064
Total Seats	152	234
SC Seats	34	44
ST Seats	15	2
Total Candidates	1,478	4,023
Women Candidates	385	442
Total Voters	3.6 Cr	5.7 Cr
Women Voters	1.8Cr	2.9 Cr
3rd Gender Voters	465	7728

Source: ECI, ADR (for women candidates)

SSLC results to be out by noon today; marks for 3rd language

Mysuru: Results of SSLC examination will be announced around Thursday noon on Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board's official site https://karresults.nic.in. More than 8.5 lakh students had registered for the exam.

On the controversial grades or marks for third-language papers, primary and secondary education minister Madhu Bangarappa announced that the state govt will follow the Karnataka HC order. Students will be awarded marks, not grades, this year. This follows the minister's meeting with CM Siddaramaiah on Wednesday.

SSLC exam-1 results will also be accessed on KarnatakaOne app and registered mobile numbers. Marks card will be available on DigiLocker instantly. TNN

'Explain in 24 hours': Poll panel notice to Kharge for calling PM 'terrorist'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The Election Commission on Wednesday issued a show-cause notice to Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge for referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a "terrorist". EC said the remark prima facie violated the model code of conduct (MCC) and the commission's instructions on maintaining decency in campaign discourse.

EC has asked Kharge to explain his stand within the next 24 hours, failing which, it said, it would take appropriate action in the matter.

This is the first notice issued by EC for violation of MCC in the current round of assembly elections.

EC has said the "use of intemperate, highly objectionable and dehumanising choice of words by a seasoned politician against a Constitutional functionary appears to be not only inconsistent with the standards of public discourse but also undermines the dignity of democratic institutions".

BJP MEETS EC

- EC says **MCC norms warn against making unverified allegations** or distortion, and Kharge's remark went against its advisory on issue-based campaigning
- BJP delegation meets EC, demands **strict action to prevent repeat offences**
- FM Sitharaman calls it an insult to people's mandate; Rijiju seeks **apology from Kharge, Congress**

▶ **Delegation meets EC, P 7**

New form seeks investment info from presumptive income-tax filers

Ahmedabad: In a significant compliance change aimed at tightening scrutiny over possible tax evasion, small businesses and professionals opting for the presumptive tax scheme will now have to disclose their investment details in their income tax returns this year, **reports Parag Dave.**

The new disclosure requirement has been introduced in ITR-4 (Sugam), recently released by Central Board for Direct Taxes. The form applies to businesses with annual turnover of up to Rs 2 crore and professionals with gross receipts of up to Rs 75 lakh a year.

Those covered include doctors, chartered accountants, lawyers, architects and consultants.

▶ **Sharper focus, P 7**

'India will never bow to terror': Modi on Pahalgam attack anniv

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: India will never bow to any form of terror, and the heinous designs of terrorists will never succeed, PM Modi said on the first anniversary of the Pahalgam terror attack on Wednesday, as he led the nation in paying tributes to its victims. United States and Israel, among several countries, also honoured the memory of the victims, expressing solidarity with India on the occasion.

"Remembering the innocent lives lost in the gruesome Pahalgam terror attack on this day last year. They will never be forgotten. My thoughts are also with the bereaved families as they cope with this loss. As a nation, we stand united in grief and resolve," he said.

ANI

A securityman with a sniffer dog searches for explosives along the Lidder river in Pahalgam on Wednesday

Home minister Amit Shah said the pain of loss of Indian lives remains in the heart of every person.

▶ **'Enemy of humanity', P 8**

VO2 test reveals record-setting Army marathoner

Pune: Science pointed the way. Legs carried it through. A routine VO2 max test — a measure of how efficiently the body uses oxygen under increasing workload — redirected Army runner **Sawan Barwal**, 28, from track to marathon. Two years later, it delivered a national record, erasing a 48-year-old mark, **reports Sandip Dighe.** Barwal clocked 2:11:58 on his marathon debut at Rotterdam, shaving 2 seconds off Shivnath Singh's 2:12:00 from 1978 — one of Indian athletics' longest-standing benchmarks.

▶ **Goal was to finish, P 6**

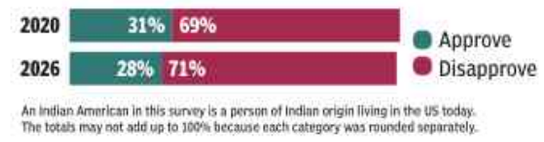
40% Indian Americans considered leaving US

Under Donald Trump's second term, Indian Americans are confronting political choices they've not faced before. Trump hasn't won them over, but Democrats no longer command the same certainty either — a new Carnegie Endowment survey shows growing political unease

1 71% OF INDIAN AMERICANS SAY TRUMP ISN'T DOING A GOOD JOB

Far more than Hispanic or White communities. And only behind Black communities. In fact, approval of Trump is lower among Indian Americans than among Americans overall. Opposition was higher for deportations (74%) than for the effort to stop birthright citizenship (71%), or the $100,000 H-1B visa fee (66%)

Do Indian Americans approve of Trump's performance as president?



An Indian American in this survey is a person of Indian origin living in the US today.
The totals may not add up to 100% because each category was rounded separately.

2 BUT DISENCHANTMENT WITH DEMOCRATS IS GROWING, TOO

Indian Americans still skew Democratic. And among them, younger, female, college-educated, Hindu, high-income, and US-born Indian Americans are the most Democratic-leaning groups. The most Republican-leaning group is that of Indian American Christians. But in the past six years, the share of Democratic-leaning Indian Americans has declined

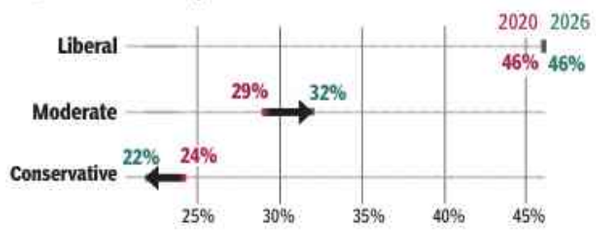
Party identification of Indian American respondents

Totals may not add up to 100% because independents are not shown

3 THAT LEAVES THEM IN AN AWKWARD MIDDLE

Over time, disapproval of Trump's policies has not turned into a neat bloc of support for Democrats. And Republican identification has also increased only modestly. Ideologically, Indian Americans are converging on the centre

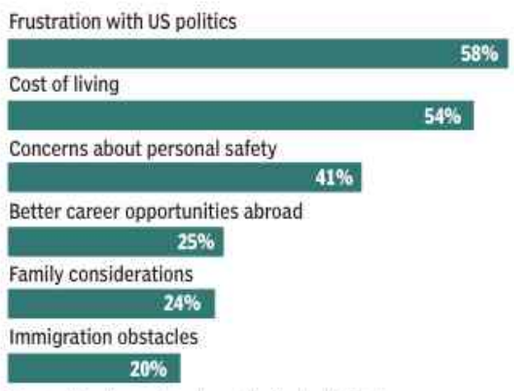
Are Indian Americans liberal, moderate, or conservative?



4 ABOUT 40% HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT LEAVING THE US

But they don't necessarily think of heading to India — 62% named some other country as a potential destination

If they did think of leaving the US, what was the reason?

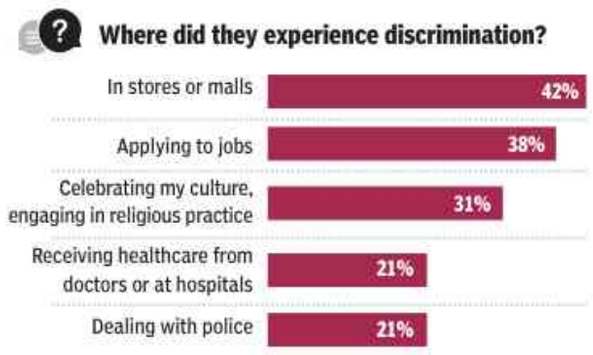


Figures include only respondents who considered leaving the US to live in another country. They could cite more than one reason

5 HALF SAY THEY HAVE FACED DISCRIMINATION

Most commonly, based on skin colour (36%) and country of origin (21%). And the most likely setting for that kind of discrimination, they say, is a routine trip to the store or mall

Where did they experience discrimination?



Respondents who said they hadn't felt personally discriminated against since the start of 2025 are not shown

6 1 IN 5 HAVE STOPPED WEARING INDIAN ATTIRE IN PUBLIC

The biggest form of disengagement in anticipation of harassment, though, is online

Activities avoided due to fear of discrimination	
Discussing or engaging with politics or political topics on social media	31%
Leaving and re-entering the US for travel	21%
Putting a political sign in front of your home or bumper sticker on your car	21%
Publicly wearing Indian dress/attire	19%
Attending a political rally or protest	18%

A respondent could have more than one response

7 VANCE'S CONVERSION TALK UNSETTLED MANY

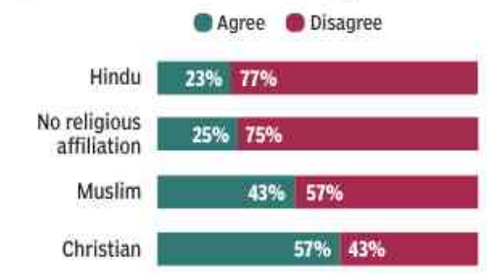
In Oct 2025, US vice president JD Vance had said that he hoped that his Hindu wife, Usha Vance, would be "somehow moved" by Christianity and "eventually" share his faith. More than 70% of Indian Americans surveyed said they felt uncomfortable about how Indian religious backgrounds are seen in American public life

73% said it made them feel that Indian Americans need stronger representation in US politics

8 HINDUS PUSH BACK THE HARDEST ON CONVERSION IN MARRIAGE

Even more than those with no religious affiliation. And, overall, 72% of Indian Americans surveyed supported the idea of interfaith marriages

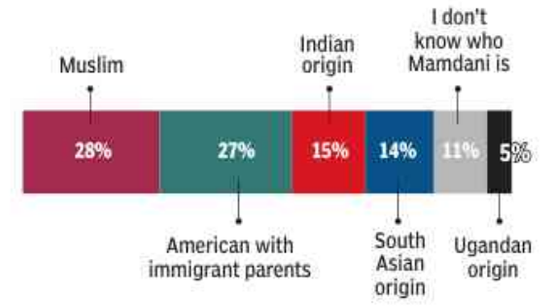
Is it fair to expect a spouse to convert to one's own religion?



9 WHILE THEY SEE MAMDANI AS A MUSLIM OR AMERICAN FIRST...

And an Indian-origin person later

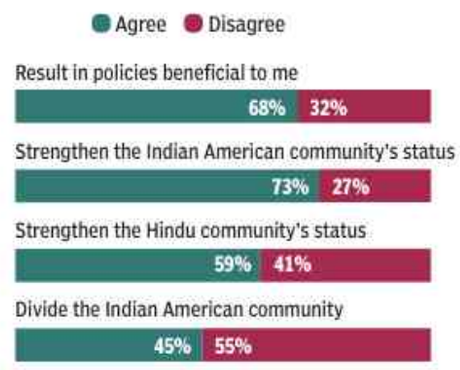
How Indian Americans regard Zohran Mamdani's background?



10 ...SOMEONE LIKE HIM, THEY THINK, WILL RAISE INDIAN AMERICANS' STANDING

While they also admitted the possibility of the Indian American community getting more divided if politicians like New York mayor Zohran Mamdani are elected, they said it would also strengthen the Hindu community's status. Maybe, he's just a sign of what they feel they are missing

Indian Americans expect that having more elected officials like Zohran Mamdani will...



Source: 'Indian Americans in a Time of Turbulence: 2026 Survey Results', Carnegie Endowment for International Peace